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Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations

Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 55/235, the General Assembly reaffirmed the principles underlying the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations and adopted a new system of adjustments of the scale of assessments for the regular budget to be used in fixing rates of assessment applicable to peacekeeping operations. This system was based on assigning each Member State to one of 10 levels, using its average per capita gross national product during the period 1993-1998 and other criteria. In its resolution 55/236, the Assembly welcomed voluntary movements by a number of Member States to levels higher than would result from the application of the new system.

Also in resolution 55/235, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to update the composition of the levels on a triennial basis, in conjunction with the reviews of the scale of assessments for the regular budget, in accordance with the criteria established in the resolution, and to report thereon to the Assembly. The first such report was submitted in 2003, and the second in 2006. By the same resolution, the Assembly decided that the structure of contribution levels to be implemented from 1 July 2001 would be reviewed after nine years.

By its resolution 61/243, the General Assembly recalled its decision to review the structure of levels of contribution for peacekeeping operations after nine years and decided to carry out the review at its sixty-fourth session. In light of its decision, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-fourth session on the updating of the composition of levels of contribution for peacekeeping operations for the period from 2010 to 2012.

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The present report responds to the Assembly's request and provides information on updating the composition of levels of contribution for peacekeeping operations for the period from 2010 to 2012. Information is provided on changes in the peacekeeping levels of Member States based on average per capita gross national income during the period from 2002 to 2007. These are based on the data used by the Committee on Contributions in reviewing the scale of assessments for the period from 2010 to 2012, which will be considered by the General Assembly during its sixty-fourth session.

Until the General Assembly has adopted a new scale, it will not be possible to determine the corresponding rates of assessment for peacekeeping for the period from 2010 to 2012. Further, any adjustments to the structure of contribution levels for peacekeeping operations, as may be decided by the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, would also need to be taken into account in determining the rates of assessment for peacekeeping. For illustrative purposes, however, on the basis of the existing structure of contributions levels, annex IV shows the peacekeeping rates of assessment corresponding to the scale of assessments for the period from 2010 to 2012 included for information in the report of the Committee on Contributions.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 1874 (S-IV) of 27 June 1963, the General Assembly established certain principles to be applied to the financing of peacekeeping operations. Subsequently, in its resolution 3101 (XXVIII) of 11 December 1973, the Assembly made ad hoc arrangements for the financing of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) based on those principles. These ad hoc arrangements involved basing each Member State's rate of assessment for UNEF on its rate of assessment for the regular budget, as adjusted on the basis of its assignment to one of four groups. Member States in groups C and D had their regular budget rates reduced by 80 and 90 per cent respectively, those in group B paid at the same rate and the permanent members of the Security Council, assigned to group A, paid the difference pro rata to their rates of assessment for the regular budget. This ad hoc formula was applied subsequently, subject to a number of changes over the years to the membership of groups B, C and D.

2. In its resolution 55/235 of 23 December 2000, the General Assembly reaffirmed the principles set out in its resolutions 1874 (S-IV) of 27 June 1963 and 3101 (XXVIII) of 11 December 1973. The Assembly also reaffirmed the following general principles underlying the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations:

(a) The financing of such operations is the collective responsibility of all States Members of the United Nations and, accordingly, the costs of peacekeeping operations are expenses of the Organization to be borne by Member States in accordance with Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations;

(b) In order to meet the expenditures caused by such operations, a different procedure is required from that applied to meet expenditures under the regular budget of the United Nations;

(c) Whereas the economically more developed countries are in a position to make relatively larger contributions to peacekeeping operations, the economically less developed countries have a relatively limited capacity to contribute towards peacekeeping operations involving heavy expenditures;

(d) The special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security should be borne in mind in connection with their contributions to the financing of peace and security operations;

(e) Where circumstances warrant, the General Assembly should give special consideration to the situation of any Member States which are victims of, and those which are otherwise involved in, the events or actions leading to a peacekeeping operation.

3. By resolution 55/235, the General Assembly established a new system of adjustments of regular budget scale rates in determining Member States' rates of assessment for peacekeeping operations. This system was based on a number of criteria, including a comparison of the average per capita gross national product (GNP) of each Member State during the six-year base period used for preparing the scale of assessments with the corresponding average for all Member States. These criteria, which were set out in paragraph 10 of resolution 55/235, were used to place

each Member State in one of 10 levels, from A to J. In that regard, the General Assembly decided the following:

(a) Assessment rates for the financing of peacekeeping operations should be based on the scale of assessments for the regular budget of the United Nations, with an appropriate and transparent system of adjustments based on levels of Member States, consistent with the principles outlined above;

(b) The permanent members of the Security Council should form a separate level and, consistent with their special responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and security, should be assessed at a higher rate than for the regular budget;

(c) All discounts resulting from adjustments to the regular budget assessment rates of Member States in levels C through J should be borne on a pro rata basis by the permanent members of the Security Council;

(d) The least developed countries should be placed in a separate level and receive the highest rate of discount available under the scale;

(e) The statistical data used for setting the rates of assessment for peacekeeping should be the same as the data used in preparing the regular budget scale of assessments, subject to the provisions of resolution 55/235;

(f) Levels of discount should be created to facilitate automatic, predictable movement between categories on the basis of the per capita gross national product of Member States.

4. In establishing the system, the General Assembly decided, also by resolution 55/235, that Member States would be assigned to the lowest level of contribution with the highest discount for which they are eligible, unless they indicated a decision to move to a higher level. Transitions specified for 2001-2003 in resolution 55/236 would occur in equal increments over the transition period and, after 2001-2003, transition periods of two years would apply to countries moving up by two levels and transition periods of three years would apply to countries moving up by three levels or more. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to update the composition of the levels on a triennial basis, in conjunction with the regular budget scale of assessment reviews, in accordance with the criteria established above, and to report thereon to the Assembly. Finally, the Assembly decided that the structure of contribution levels to be implemented from 1 July 2001 would be reviewed after nine years.

5. In its resolution 55/236, also of 23 December 2000, the General Assembly welcomed decisions by a number of Member States to move voluntarily to higher levels than required under the criteria set out in paragraph 10 of resolution 55/235.

6. By its resolution 61/243 of 22 December 2006, the General Assembly recalled its decision in resolution 55/235 to review the structure of levels of contribution for peacekeeping operations after nine years, and decided to carry out the review at its sixty-fourth session. In light of its decision, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-fourth session on the updating of the composition of levels of contribution for peacekeeping operations for the period from 2010 to 2012.

7. In previous reports on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236,[1] the Secretary-General outlined his understanding of the provisions of the resolutions and how he intended to carry out his responsibilities under resolution 55/235. The present report reflects the understandings outlined in those earlier reports. It also reflects a request sent by Hungary on 6 August 2009 (see annex I).

II. Composition of levels for the financing of peacekeeping operations

8. The initial composition of levels used for establishing rates of assessment for peacekeeping operations for the period 1 July 2001 to 31 December 2003 was listed in the annex to General Assembly resolution 55/235. Permanent members of the Security Council were included in level A. Member States on the list of the least developed countries were included in level J. Specified Member States were included in level C. The placement of other Member States was based on their average per capita GNP during the six-year base period (data for 1993-1998) used for the scale of assessments for 2001-2003 in relation to the average for all Member States. The thresholds applied were set out in the table in paragraph 10 of resolution 55/235. The initial placement of Member States in levels B and D to I was based on their average per capita GNP for the six-year base period 1993-1998 and the average per capita GNP of all Member States for that period, which was $4,797.

9. Since 2001, the scale of assessments has been prepared using two base periods, of six and three years. On the basis of the provisions of resolution 55/235 and the practice adopted by the General Assembly for the composition of levels for the period 2001-2003, the Secretary-General has subsequently updated the composition of levels for the periods 2004-2006 and 2007-2009 using the average data on gross national income (GNI) for the six-year base period used by the Committee on Contributions in considering the scale of assessments for these periods. As outlined in the Committee's report on its sixty-second session,[2] the concept of GNP in the System of National Accounts, 1968 has been renamed GNI in the System of National Accounts, 1993, but this is just a refinement of product and income concepts and does not entail a change in the actual coverage of the concept.

10. In updating the composition of levels for the periods 2004-2006 and 2007-2009, the base periods 1996-2001 and 1999-2004 were used respectively. Average per capita GNI for all Member States of $5,094 and $5,517.84 were reported for the base periods 1996-2001 and 1999-2004 respectively.

11. The General Assembly has not so far decided on the elements of the methodology to be used in preparing the scale of assessments for the period 2010-2012. In the absence of any specific guidance from the Assembly with regard to the new scale, the Committee on Contributions at its sixty-ninth session in 2009 decided to review the scale of assessments for the period 2010-2012 on the basis of its general mandate under rule 160 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and the provisions of resolution 58/1 B of 23 December 2003. In doing

[1] A/C.5/55/38 and Add.1, A/58/157 and Add.1, and A/61/139 and Corr.1 and Add.1.

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 11* (A/57/11), para. 8.

so, it agreed on certain conclusions and recommendations with regard to the methodology, reviewed the data provided by the United Nations Statistics Division for the period 2002-2007, decided that the market exchange rates of a number of Member States should be adjusted and provided, for information, machine scales showing the results of applying to the GNI data for 2002-2007 the methodology used in preparing the scale of assessments for the period 2007-2009.

12. In updating the composition of levels of contribution for peacekeeping operations for the period 2010-2012, the Secretary-General was guided by the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236, his understanding of the mandates therein as outlined in his earlier reports and the practice adopted by the Assembly in fixing the composition of levels for earlier periods. Accordingly, data for the six-year period 2002-2007 was used in updating the composition of levels for the period 2010-2012 and the corresponding thresholds are shown in annex II to the present report. These are based on the provisions of resolution 55/235 and each Member State's average per capita GNI for 2002-2007 in relation to the membership average of $6,707.92. The illustrative information in the present document reflects level C on the basis of the composition specified in the annex to resolution 55/235. In setting out his understanding of the implementation of resolutions 55/235 and 55/236 (see A/C.5/55/38, paras. 13 and 16), the Secretary-General indicated that, since there were no criteria specified for inclusion in level C, the countries listed under level C in the annex to resolution 55/235 would remain in level C at least until the review of the structure of levels at the main part of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. Further, it was the understanding of the Secretariat that, in updating the composition of the 10 levels, the Secretary-General should include those countries at their voluntarily established levels for 2001-2003 unless their revised levels would otherwise be higher or unless they indicated a decision to revert to a lower level for which they were eligible in the new scale period.

13. On that basis, and prior to the application of any phasing or voluntary movements, the Czech Republic would move up from level G to level E, Croatia would move up from level I to level H, Estonia would move up from level I to level F (but is assumed to remain voluntarily at level B), Hungary would move up from level H to level F (but is assumed to remain voluntarily at level B), Latvia would move up from level I to level H (but is assumed to remain voluntarily at level H*), the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya would move up from level I to level H, Lithuania would move up from level I to level H (but is assumed to remain voluntarily at level H*), Malta would move up from level D to level B (currently its voluntary level), Poland would move up from level I to level H (but is assumed to remain voluntarily at level H*), Saint Kitts and Nevis would move down from level G to level H, Saudi Arabia would move up from level F to level E, Slovakia would move up from level H to level G (equivalent to its current voluntary level of H*) and Trinidad and Tobago would move up from level G to level E.

14. Under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 55/235, the upward movements of the Czech Republic and Trinidad and Tobago are subject to the appropriate transitional periods. These have been applied in the manner outlined in the Secretary-General's earlier report (A/C.5/55/38) and are reflected in annex III to the present report. As Malta is currently at level B voluntarily, it is assumed that no phasing would be required during 2010-2012.

15. In its resolution 55/236, the General Assembly welcomed the voluntary commitment of a number of Member States to contribute to peacekeeping operations at a rate higher than required by their per capita income. In updating the composition of levels in previous years, it has been the Secretariat's understanding that the Member States concerned should be included at their voluntarily established levels unless their revised levels would be higher or unless they indicate a decision to revert to a lower level for which they are eligible in the new scale period. In this connection, the Secretary-General has received a letter dated 6 August 2009 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations requesting that Hungary be allowed to move to level F, from its current level of B, in keeping with the fundamental principle of capacity to pay (see annex I to the present report). Hungary fell within level H in 2006-2009, but remained voluntarily at level B. On the basis of the peacekeeping levels and thresholds set out in annex II, Hungary would fall within level F in 2010-2012. The updated composition of levels in annex III reflects this request.

III. Rates of assessment for the financing of peacekeeping operations

16. As reflected in annex II to the present report, the composition of levels of contribution for peacekeeping operations for 2010-2012 has been updated in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 55/235. The updated composition of levels, subject to adjustments arising from the General Assembly's review of the structure of contribution levels, would be used together with the scale of assessments for 2010-2012 to establish each Member State's peacekeeping rate of assessment. The General Assembly will consider the scale of assessments for the period from 2010 to 2012 during its sixty-fourth session. Until it has adopted a new scale, it will not be possible to determine the corresponding rates of assessment for peacekeeping for the period from 2010 to 2012.

17. For illustrative purposes, however, annex III shows the peacekeeping rates of assessment (correct to four decimal places) corresponding to the scale of assessments for the period from 2010 to 2012 included for information in the report of the Committee on Contributions.[3]

IV. Conclusions

18. The General Assembly may wish to take note of this report and decide on the structure of levels of contribution for peacekeeping operations, and the composition for the period from 2010 to 2012.

[3] Ibid., *Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 11* (A/64/11), para. 74.

Annex I

Letter dated 6 August 2009 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations, where Hungary was listed under category B in General Assembly resolution 55/236. Hungary has made a voluntary movement and decided to move from level I to level B, with a transition time of five years, starting on 1 July 2001 and ending on 1 July 2005. It will be recalled that this movement to contribute to the peacekeeping operations was at a rate much higher than required for Hungary under the current arrangement of the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations.

In view of the growing financial burden arising from the continuous and significant increase in the United Nations peacekeeping operations budget over the last years and the current economic situation which has made it difficult for Hungary to meet its financial obligations at a higher rate than required, my Government requests that Hungary be allowed to move to level F from level B of the peacekeeping scale of assessments in keeping with the fundamental principle of "capacity to pay".

I should be grateful if you could arrange to have my Government's request duly reflected in your report on updating the composition of the peacekeeping scale levels for 2010-2012, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session.

(*Signed*) Attila **Zimonyi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex II

Peacekeeping levels, based on average per capita gross national income of Member States and other factors

Level	*Criteria*	*Threshold in United States dollars (2010-2012)*	*Discount (per cent)*
A	Permanent members of the Security Council	Not applicable	Premium
B	All Member States, except those covered below and level A	Not applicable	0
C	As listed in the annex to General Assembly resolution 55/235	Not applicable	7.5
D	Member States with per capita GNI less than 2 times the average for all Member States (except level A, C and J contributors)	Under 13,416	20
E	Member States with per capita GNI less than 1.8 times the average for all Member States (except level A, C and J contributors)	Under 12,074	40
F	Member States with per capita GNI less than 1.6 times the average for all Member States (except level A, C and J contributors)	Under 10,733	60
G	Member States with per capita GNI less than 1.4 times the average for all Member States (except level A, C and J contributors)	Under 9,391	70
H	Member States with per capita GNI less than 1.2 times the average for all Member States (except level A, C and J contributors)	Under 8,050	80 (or 70 on a voluntary basis)[a]
I	Member States with per capita GNI less than the average for all Member States (except level A, C and J contributors)	Under 6,708	80
J	Least developed countries (except level A and C contributors)	Not applicable	90

[a] Member States in level H* have a discount of 70 per cent.

Annex III

Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236, 2010-2012

Member State	*Level in 2009*	*Voluntary level during 2009 if different*	*Level in 2010-2012 based on data for 2002-2007*	*Assumed voluntary level in 2010-2012 if different*	*Percentage of regular budget rates payable*	
					2010	*2011-2012*
Afghanistan	J		J		10	10
Albania	I		I		20	20
Algeria	I		I		20	20
Andorra	B		B		100	100
Angola	J		J		10	10
Antigua and Barbuda	F		F		40	40
Argentina	I		I		20	20
Armenia	I		I		20	20
Australia	B		B		100	100
Austria	B		B		100	100
Azerbaijan	I		I		20	20
Bahamas	B		B		100	100
Bahrain	B		B		100	100
Bangladesh	J		J		10	10
Barbados	E		E		60	60
Belarus	I		I		20	20
Belgium	B		B		100	100
Belize	I		I		20	20
Benin	J		J		10	10
Bhutan	J		J		10	10
Bolivia	I		I		20	20
Bosnia and Herzegovina	I		I		20	20
Botswana	I		I		20	20
Brazil	I		I		20	20
Brunei Darussalam	C		C		92.5	92.5
Bulgaria	I	H[a]	I	H[a]	30	30

Member State	Level in 2009	Voluntary level during 2009 if different	Level in 2010-2012 based on data for 2002-2007	Assumed voluntary level in 2010-2012 if different	Percentage of regular budget rates payable	
					2010	2011-2012
Burkina Faso	J		J		10	10
Burundi	J		J		10	10
Cambodia	J		J		10	10
Cameroon	I		I		20	20
Canada	B		B		100	100
Cape Verde	J		J		10	10
Central African Republic	J		J		10	10
Chad	J		J		10	10
Chile	I		I		20	20
China	A		A		100+	100+
Colombia	I		I		20	20
Comoros	J		J		10	10
Congo	I		I		20	20
Costa Rica	I		I		20	20
Côte d'Ivoire	I		I		20	20
Croatia	I		H		20	20
Cuba	I		I		20	20
Cyprus	B		B		100	100
Czech Republic	G		F[b]		45	60
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	I		I		20	20
Democratic Republic of the Congo	J		J		10	10
Denmark	B		B		100	100
Djibouti	J		J		10	10
Dominica	I		I		20	20
Dominican Republic	I		I		20	20
Ecuador	I		I		20	20
Egypt	I		I		20	20
El Salvador	I		I		20	20
Equatorial Guinea	J		J		10	10
Eritrea	J		J		10	10

Member State	*Level in 2009*	*Voluntary level during 2009 if different*	*Level in 2010-2012 based on data for 2002-2007*	*Assumed voluntary level in 2010-2012 if different*	*Percentage of regular budget rates payable*	
					2010	*2011-2012*
Estonia	I	B	F	B	100	100
Ethiopia	J		J		10	10
Fiji	I		I		20	20
Finland	B		B		100	100
France	A		A		100+	100+
Gabon	I		I		20	20
Gambia	J		J		10	10
Georgia	I		I		20	20
Germany	B		B		100	100
Ghana	I		I		20	20
Greece	B		B		100	100
Grenada	I		I		20	20
Guatemala	I		I		20	20
Guinea	J		J		10	10
Guinea-Bissau	J		J		10	10
Guyana	I		I		20	20
Haiti	J		J		10	10
Honduras	I		I		20	20
Hungary	H	B	F		40	40
Iceland	B		B		100	100
India	I		I		20	20
Indonesia	I		I		20	20
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	I		I		20	20
Iraq	I		I		20	20
Ireland	B		B		100	100
Israel	B		B		100	100
Italy	B		B		100	100
Jamaica	I		I		20	20
Japan	B		B		100	100
Jordan	I		I		20	20

Member State	Level in 2009	Voluntary level during 2009 if different	Level in 2010-2012 based on data for 2002-2007	Assumed voluntary level in 2010-2012 if different	Percentage of regular budget rates payable	
					2010	2011-2012
Kazakhstan	I		I		20	20
Kenya	I		I		20	20
Kiribati	J		J		10	10
Kuwait	C		C		92.5	92.5
Kyrgyzstan	I		I		20	20
Lao People's Democratic Republic	J		J		10	10
Latvia	I	H*[a]	H	H*[c]	30	30
Lebanon	I		I		20	20
Lesotho	J		J		10	10
Liberia	J		J		10	10
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	I		H		20	20
Liechtenstein	B		B		100	100
Lithuania	I	H*[a]	H	H*[c]	30	30
Luxembourg	B		B		100	100
Madagascar	J		J		10	10
Malawi	J		J		10	10
Malaysia	I		I		20	20
Maldives	J		J		10	10
Mali	J		J		10	10
Malta	D	B	B	B[d]	100	100
Marshall Islands	I		I		20	20
Mauritania	J		J		10	10
Mauritius	I		I		20	20
Mexico	H		H		20	20
Micronesia (Federated States of)	I		I		20	20
Monaco	B		B		100	100
Mongolia	I		I		20	20
Montenegro	I		I		20	20
Morocco	I		I		20	20
Mozambique	J		J		10	10

Member State	*Level in 2009*	*Voluntary level during 2009, if different*	*Level in 2010-2012 based on data for 2002-2007*	*Assumed voluntary level in 2010-2012, if different*	*Percentage of regular budget rates payable*	
					2010	*2011-2012*
Myanmar	J		J		10	10
Namibia	I		I		20	20
Nauru	I		I		20	20
Nepal	J		J		10	10
Netherlands	B		B		100	100
New Zealand	B		B		100	100
Nicaragua	I		I		20	20
Niger	J		J		10	10
Nigeria	I		I		20	20
Norway	B		B		100	100
Oman	F		F		40	40
Pakistan	I		I		20	20
Palau	H		H		20	20
Panama	I		I		20	20
Papua New Guinea	I		I		20	20
Paraguay	I		I		20	20
Peru	I		I		20	20
Philippines	I		I		20	20
Poland	I	H*[a]	H	H*[a]	30	30
Portugal	B		B		100	100
Qatar	C		C		92.5	92.5
Republic of Korea	B		B		100	100
Republic of Moldova	I		I		20	20
Romania	I	H*[a]	I	H*[a]	30	30
Russian Federation	A		A		100+	100+
Rwanda	J		J		10	10
Saint Kitts and Nevis	G		H		20	20
Saint Lucia	I		I		20	20
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	I		I		20	20
Samoa	J		J		10	10

Member State	*Level in 2009*	*Voluntary level during 2009 if different*	*Level in 2010-2012 based on data for 2002-2007*	*Assumed voluntary level in 2010-2012 if different*	*Percentage of regular budget rates payable*	
					2010	*2011-2012*
San Marino	B		B		100	100
Sao Tome and Principe	J		J		10	10
Saudi Arabia	F		E		60	60
Senegal	J		J		10	10
Serbia	I		I		20	20
Seychelles	F		F		40	40
Sierra Leone	J		J		10	10
Singapore	C		C		92.5	92.5
Slovakia	I	H*[a]	G		30	30
Slovenia	B		B		100	100
Solomon Islands	J		J		10	10
Somalia	J		J		10	10
South Africa	I		I		20	20
Spain	B		B		100	100
Sri Lanka	I		I		20	20
Sudan	J		J		10	10
Suriname	I		I		20	20
Swaziland	I		I		20	20
Sweden	B		B		100	100
Switzerland	B		B		100	100
Syrian Arab Republic	I		I		20	20
Tajikistan	I		I		20	20
Thailand	I		I		20	20
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	I		I		20	20
Timor-Leste	J		J		10	10
Togo	J		J		10	10
Tonga	I		I		20	20
Trinidad and Tobago	G		E[b]		45	60
Tunisia	I		I		20	20

Member State	*Level in 2009*	*Voluntary level during 2009 if different*	*Level in 2010-2012 based on data for 2002-2007*	*Assumed voluntary level in 2010-2012 if different*	*Percentage of regular budget rates payable*	
					2010	*2011-2012*
Turkey	I		I		20	20
Turkmenistan	I		I		20	20
Tuvalu	J		J		10	10
Uganda	J		J		10	10
Ukraine	I		I		20	20
United Arab Emirates	C		C		92.5	92.5
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	A		A		100+	100+
United Republic of Tanzania	J		J		10	10
United States of America	A		A		100+	100+
Uruguay	I		I		20	20
Uzbekistan	I		I		20	20
Vanuatu	J		J		10	10
Venezuela	I		I		20	20
Viet Nam	I		I		20	20
Yemen	J		J		10	10
Zambia	J		J		10	10
Zimbabwe	I		I		20	20

[a] Member States that moved voluntarily up to level H paid at 30 per cent of their regular budget and it is assumed that this will continue.

[b] Two-year phasing for Member States moving up.

[c] See annex I to the present report.

[d] As Malta was placed in level B voluntarily in 2006, it is assumed that its movement from level D to level B based on per capita GNI data will not involve a transition period.

Annex IV

Effective rates of assessment for peacekeeping operations, 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2012, based on the results of the application of the methodology used in preparing the scale of assessments for the period 2007-2009 to GNI data for the period 2002-2007[a]

Member State	*Effective rate in 2009*	*Regular budget 2010-2012*	*Effective rates*	
			2010	*2011-2012*
Level A				
China	3.1474	3.189	3.9387	3.9340
France	7.4359	6.123	7.5625	7.5533
Russian Federation	1.4161	1.602	1.9786	1.9762
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7.8383	6.604	8.1565	8.1467
United States of America	25.9624	22.000	27.1720	27.1392
Total A	**45.8001**	**39.518**	**48.8084**	**48.7494**
Level B				
Andorra	0.0080	0.007	0.0070	0.0070
Australia	1.7870	1.933	1.9330	1.9330
Austria	0.8870	0.851	0.8510	0.8510
Bahamas	0.0160	0.018	0.0180	0.0180
Bahrain	0.0330	0.039	0.0390	0.0390
Belgium	1.1020	1.075	1.0750	1.0750
Canada	2.9770	3.207	3.2070	3.2070
Cyprus	0.0440	0.046	0.0460	0.0460
Denmark	0.7390	0.736	0.7360	0.7360
Estonia	0.0160	0.040	0.0400	0.0400
Finland	0.5640	0.566	0.5660	0.5660
Germany	8.5770	8.018	8.0180	8.0180
Greece	0.5960	0.691	0.6910	0.6910
Iceland	0.0370	0.042	0.0420	0.0420
Ireland	0.4450	0.498	0.4980	0.4980
Israel	0.4190	0.384	0.3840	0.3840
Italy	5.0790	4.999	4.9990	4.9990
Japan	16.6240	12.530	12.5300	12.5300
Liechtenstein	0.0100	0.009	0.0090	0.0090
Luxembourg	0.0850	0.090	0.0900	0.0900
Malta	0.0170	0.017	0.0170	0.0170
Monaco	0.0030	0.003	0.0030	0.0030
Netherlands	1.8730	1.855	1.8550	1.8550

Member State	*Effective rate in 2009*	*Regular budget 2010-2012*	*Effective rates*	
			2010	*2011-2012*
New Zealand	0.2560	0.273	0.2730	0.2730
Norway	0.7820	0.871	0.8710	0.8710
Portugal	0.5270	0.511	0.5110	0.5110
Republic of Korea	2.1730	2.260	2.2600	2.2600
San Marino	0.0030	0.003	0.0030	0.0030
Slovenia	0.0960	0.103	0.1030	0.1030
Spain	2.9680	3.177	3.1770	3.1770
Sweden	1.0710	1.064	1.0640	1.0640
Switzerland	1.2160	1.130	1.1300	1.1300
Total B	**51.0300**	**47.046**	**47.0460**	**47.0460**
Level C				
Brunei Darussalam	0.0241	0.028	0.0259	0.0259
Kuwait	0.1684	0.263	0.2433	0.2433
Qatar	0.0786	0.135	0.1249	0.1249
Singapore	0.3210	0.335	0.3099	0.3099
United Arab Emirates	0.2794	0.391	0.3617	0.3617
Total C	**0.8714**	**1.152**	**1.0656**	**1.0656**
Level E				
Barbados	0.0054	0.008	0.0048	0.0048
Saudi Arabia	0.2992	0.830	0.4980	0.4980
Total E	**0.3046**	**0.838**	**0.5028**	**0.5028**
Transition to E				
Czech Republic	0.0843	0.349	0.1571	0.2094
Trinidad and Tobago	0.0081	0.044	0.0198	0.0264
Total Transition to E	**0.0924**	**0.393**	**0.1769**	**0.2358**
Level F				
Antigua and Barbuda	0.0008	0.002	0.0008	0.0008
Hungary	0.2440	0.291	0.1164	0.1164
Oman	0.0292	0.086	0.0344	0.0344
Seychelles	0.0008	0.002	0.0008	0.0008
Total F	**0.2248**	**0.381**	**0.1524**	**0.1524**
Level G				
Slovakia	0.0189	0.142	0.0426	0.0426
Total G	**0.0189**	**0.142**	**0.0426**	**0.0426**
Level H*				
Bulgaria	0.0060	0.038	0.0114	0.0114

Member State	Effective rate in 2009	Regular budget 2010-2012	Effective rates 2010	Effective rates 2011-2012
Latvia	0.0054	0.038	0.0114	0.0114
Lithuania	0.0093	0.065	0.0195	0.0195
Poland	0.1503	0.828	0.2484	0.2484
Romania	0.0210	0.177	0.0531	0.0531
Total H*	**0.1920**	**1.146**	**0.3438**	**0.3438**
Level H				
Croatia	0.0100	0.097	0.0194	0.0194
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	0.0124	0.129	0.0258	0.0258
Mexico	0.4514	2.356	0.4712	0.4712
Palau	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Saint Kitts and Nevis	0.0003	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Total H	**0.4743**	**2.584**	**0.5168**	**0.5168**
Level I				
Albania	0.0012	0.010	0.0020	0.0020
Algeria	0.0170	0.128	0.0256	0.0256
Argentina	0.0650	0.287	0.0574	0.0574
Armenia	0.0004	0.005	0.0010	0.0010
Azerbaijan	0.0010	0.015	0.0030	0.0030
Belarus	0.0040	0.042	0.0084	0.0084
Belize	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Bolivia	0.0012	0.007	0.0014	0.0014
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.0012	0.014	0.0028	0.0028
Botswana	0.0028	0.018	0.0036	0.0036
Brazil	0.1752	1.611	0.3222	0.3222
Cameroon	0.0018	0.011	0.0022	0.0022
Chile	0.0322	0.236	0.0472	0.0472
Colombia	0.0210	0.144	0.0288	0.0288
Congo	0.0002	0.003	0.0006	0.0006
Costa Rica	0.0064	0.034	0.0068	0.0068
Côte d'Ivoire	0.0018	0.010	0.0020	0.0020
Cuba	0.0108	0.071	0.0142	0.0142
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	0.0014	0.007	0.0014	0.0014
Dominica	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Dominican Republic	0.0048	0.042	0.0084	0.0084
Ecuador	0.0042	0.040	0.0080	0.0080
Egypt	0.0176	0.094	0.0188	0.0188
El Salvador	0.0040	0.019	0.0038	0.0038

Member State	Effective rate in 2009	Regular budget 2010-2012	Effective rates 2010	2011-2012
Fiji	0.0006	0.004	0.0008	0.0008
Gabon	0.0016	0.014	0.0028	0.0028
Georgia	0.0006	0.006	0.0012	0.0012
Ghana	0.0008	0.006	0.0012	0.0012
Grenada	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Guatemala	0.0064	0.028	0.0056	0.0056
Guyana	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Honduras	0.0010	0.008	0.0016	0.0016
India	0.0900	0.534	0.1068	0.1068
Indonesia	0.0322	0.238	0.0476	0.0476
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0.0360	0.233	0.0466	0.0466
Iraq	0.0030	0.020	0.0040	0.0040
Jamaica	0.0020	0.014	0.0028	0.0028
Jordan	0.0024	0.014	0.0028	0.0028
Kazakhstan	0.0058	0.076	0.0152	0.0152
Kenya	0.0020	0.012	0.0024	0.0024
Kyrgyzstan	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Lebanon	0.0068	0.033	0.0066	0.0066
Malaysia	0.0380	0.253	0.0506	0.0506
Marshall Islands	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Mauritius	0.0022	0.011	0.0022	0.0022
Micronesia (Federated States of)	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Mongolia	0.0002	0.002	0.0004	0.0004
Montenegro	0.0002	0.004	0.0008	0.0008
Morocco	0.0084	0.058	0.0116	0.0116
Namibia	0.0012	0.008	0.0016	0.0016
Nauru	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Nicaragua	0.0004	0.003	0.0006	0.0006
Nigeria	0.0096	0.078	0.0156	0.0156
Pakistan	0.0118	0.082	0.0164	0.0164
Panama	0.0046	0.022	0.0044	0.0044
Papua New Guinea	0.0004	0.002	0.0004	0.0004
Paraguay	0.0010	0.007	0.0014	0.0014
Peru	0.0156	0.090	0.0180	0.0180
Philippines	0.0156	0.090	0.0180	0.0180
Republic of Moldova	0.0002	0.002	0.0004	0.0004
Saint Lucia	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002

Member State	Effective rate in 2009	Regular budget 2010-2012	Effective rates 2010	2011-2012
Serbia	0.0042	0.037	0.0074	0.0074
South Africa	0.0580	0.385	0.0770	0.0770
Sri Lanka	0.0032	0.019	0.0038	0.0038
Suriname	0.0002	0.003	0.0006	0.0006
Swaziland	0.0004	0.003	0.0006	0.0006
Syrian Arab Republic	0.0032	0.025	0.0050	0.0050
Tajikistan	0.0002	0.002	0.0004	0.0004
Thailand	0.0372	0.209	0.0418	0.0418
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0.0010	0.007	0.0014	0.0014
Tonga	0.0002	0.001	0.0002	0.0002
Tunisia	0.0062	0.030	0.0060	0.0060
Turkey	0.0762	0.617	0.1234	0.1234
Turkmenistan	0.0012	0.026	0.0052	0.0052
Ukraine	0.0090	0.087	0.0174	0.0174
Uruguay	0.0034	0.027	0.0054	0.0054
Uzbekistan	0.0016	0.010	0.0020	0.0020
Venezuela	0.0400	0.314	0.0628	0.0628
Viet Nam	0.0048	0.033	0.0066	0.0066
Zimbabwe	0.0016	0.003	0.0006	0.0006
Total I	**0.9316**	**6.648**	**1.3296**	**1.3296**
Level J				
Afghanistan	0.0001	0.004	0.0004	0.0004
Angola	0.0003	0.010	0.0010	0.0010
Bangladesh	0.0010	0.010	0.0010	0.0010
Benin	0.0001	0.003	0.0003	0.0003
Bhutan	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Burkina Faso	0.0002	0.003	0.0003	0.0003
Burundi	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Cambodia	0.0001	0.003	0.0003	0.0003
Cape Verde	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Central African Republic	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Chad	0.0001	0.002	0.0002	0.0002
Comoros	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.0003	0.003	0.0003	0.0003

Member State	Effective rate in 2009	Regular budget 2010-2012	Effective rates	
			2010	2011-2012
Djibouti	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Equatorial Guinea	0.0002	0.008	0.0008	0.0008
Eritrea	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Ethiopia	0.0003	0.008	0.0008	0.0008
Gambia	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Guinea	0.0001	0.002	0.0002	0.0002
Guinea-Bissau	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Haiti	0.0002	0.003	0.0003	0.0003
Kiribati	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Lesotho	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Liberia	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Madagascar	0.0002	0.003	0.0003	0.0003
Malawi	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Maldives	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Mali	0.0001	0.003	0.0003	0.0003
Mauritania	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Mozambique	0.0001	0.003	0.0003	0.0003
Myanmar	0.0005	0.006	0.0006	0.0006
Nepal	0.0003	0.006	0.0006	0.0006
Niger	0.0001	0.002	0.0002	0.0002
Rwanda	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Samoa	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Sao Tome and Principe	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Senegal	0.0004	0.006	0.0006	0.0006
Sierra Leone	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Solomon Islands	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Somalia	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Sudan	0.0010	0.010	0.0010	0.0010
Timor-Leste	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Togo	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Tuvalu	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
Uganda	0.0003	0.006	0.0006	0.0006
United Republic of Tanzania	0.0006	0.008	0.0008	0.0008
Vanuatu	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001

Member State	*Effective rate in 2009*	*Regular budget 2010-2012*	*Effective rates*	
			2010	*2011-2012*
Yemen	0.0007	0.010	0.0010	0.0010
Zambia	0.0001	0.004	0.0004	0.0004
Total J	**0.0100**	**0.152**	**0.0152**	**0.0152**
Grand total	**100.0000**	**100.000**	**100.0000**	**100.0000**

Note: The effective rates of assessment for peacekeeping operations shown above are calculated according to the system of adjustments adopted in General Assembly resolution 55/235 (see annex I) and are displayed at 4 decimal places.

[a] Included in the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/64/11, para. 74) for information.

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Agriculture development and food security

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The impacts of the 2008 food crisis have been complex and far-reaching, increasing the number of hungry and undernourished people in the world and jeopardizing the progress made in achieving internationally agreed development goals. Climate change, energy needs, diminishing natural resources and ailing or outdated market systems all are factors that affect the ability to respond to the food security challenge in a strategic and systematic manner. The global consensus has produced a strategic framework for action that includes short-term amelioratory measures and long-term structural solutions, which need to be undertaken in the form of an integrated, sustainable development strategy. Such a strategy would build upon and sustain current initiatives to address the crisis and place it in the context of a comprehensive and coordinated response at all levels. Stimulating economic growth in rural areas will positively influence poverty reduction and food security. This could be achieved by enhancing agricultural productivity; making a sustainable green revolution a reality; promoting cooperation for mobilizing new and additional resources; and investing in rural infrastructure, research and development, and in the technical and social capacities of government agencies as well as local communities.

* A/64/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in response to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/235 that the Secretary-General submit to the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on national, regional and international efforts to address agriculture development and food security within the context of national and international development policies, under the item entitled "Agriculture development and food security".

2. The report benefited from inputs received from the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and from the analysis and conclusions presented in the Comprehensive Framework for Action developed by the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis[1] in July 2008, and in the outline of progress against the Comprehensive Framework for Action published by the Task Force secretariat in July 2009. It also draws upon the outcomes of the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development that pertain to agriculture and rural development.

3. The issue of food security was brought into sharp focus by the succession of shocks that hit the world economy in 2008, including energy price volatility, the rapid escalation of food and commodity prices, the financial crisis and the ensuing economic recession. However, the structural causes of food insecurity are not new. The global system of agriculture, food production and natural resource management suffers from a number of problems:

(a) There is enough food to provide everyone in the world with a balanced and healthy diet, food production has grown steadily over a half-century, and yet hunger and malnutrition persist and are widespread;

(b) Second, as evidenced by the 2008 situation, food security has systematically been at risk from price volatility, especially, but not exclusively, with respect to food grains. The global community recognized this problem as long ago as 1962, with the international development strategy, calling for commodity price stabilization as a key plank of development;

(c) Third, trends indicate a widening gap between the increasingly rapid growth in the demand for more resource-intensive food commodities and the slower growth in yields in food production;

(d) Fourth, demand is also projected to grow for alternative uses of land and water, especially for the rehabilitation of ecosystem services (including expanding the forest cover and protecting soils), as well as for non-food production (including the growing demand for bioenergy products);

(e) Fifth, climate change is projected to have fairly widespread and, on balance, adverse impacts on global agriculture;

[1] More information on the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis and the Comprehensive Framework for Action is available at www.un-foodsecurity.org.

(f) Sixth, there is a tremendous amount of experience and learning about best practices in the areas of the sustainable and equitable management of soils, water, biodiversity, participatory practices and rural development, which for one reason or another, have failed to be utilized on a sufficiently wide scale. A major policy goal is to create conditions in which such practices are used on a universal scale;

(g) Seventh, for ecological and institutional reasons, Africa did not experience the green revolution, and yields remain much below those of other regions;

(h) Finally, the green revolution that took place in other regions is based on unsustainable methods that overuse fossil energy resources as well as chemicals and water. There is now a need to go beyond overuse into a more sustainable phase of the green revolution.

4. Policy documents and analyses going back several decades refer to some or all of those problems over and over again. Yet, like the poor, they are still with us.

5. This poses a dual challenge to the policy community (see box 1 below). On the one hand, policies and responses need to be put in place that address the current food security crisis; these will consist mainly of social safety nets and other means of protecting poor and vulnerable communities from deprivation. On the other hand, there is a need to consider longer-term measures, including investment in a new, "sustainable" green revolution, so as to address the underlying structural determinants, build resilience and contribute to food security in the long term.

Box 1
Strategic framework for improving food security

The twin-track approach can provide an overall strategic framework for improving food security. This framework includes equally critical and mutually reinforcing short-term and long-term measures and is highly relevant in the current context of high food prices. One track aims to promote the supply response of the agricultural sector, particularly among smallholders, and the development of rural areas through appropriate incentives and investments in public goods. The objective is to increase food supplies and to enhance the income-generating capacity of agriculture and the rural economy as a means of promoting overall rural development. The other track aims to ensure immediate access to food by the poor and vulnerable in both rural and urban areas by providing safety nets and social protection measures.

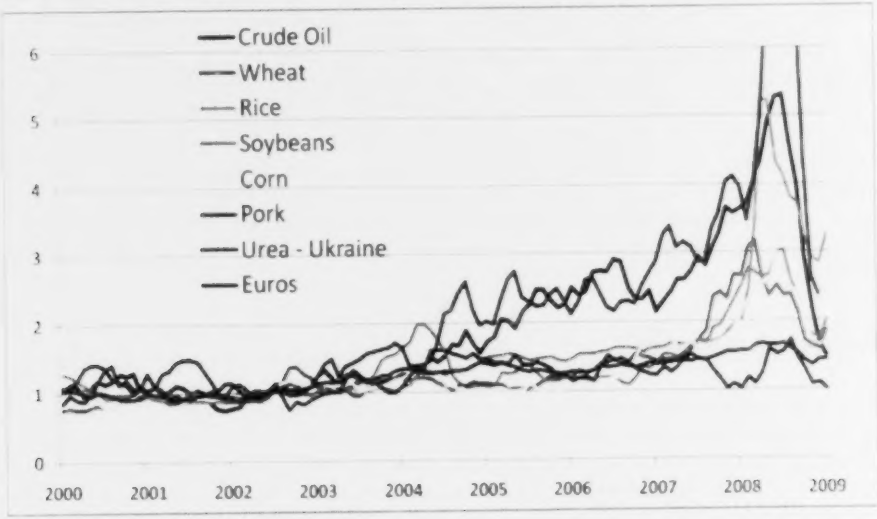
Source: FAO, *Food Outlook 2008*, Rome, November 2008.

II. Food security situation: an overview

A. The 2008 crisis and its aftermath

6. Even before 2008, world food insecurity was at an unacceptable level, as an estimated 963 million people (or one seventh of the world population) were undernourished. However, the situation has reached crisis proportions because of the rapid escalation of the price of food and other commodities in 2008 (see figure below). For the first time in human history, there are more than 1 billion undernourished people — 1.02 billion, to be exact, equivalent to one sixth of the world's population.[2] Today, the prevalence rate of hunger exceeds 35 per cent in 16 countries in Africa, and external assistance is needed routinely by 30 countries — 20 in Africa and 10 in Asia — to overcome food insecurity resulting from natural disasters, conflict or insecurity, and economic downturns.[3] With the 2015 date for the Millennium Development Goals[4] drawing closer, progress in attaining hunger and poverty reduction targets, which was already somewhat mixed, has been dealt a severe setback, and a reversal of progress has taken place in particular with respect to Millennium Development Goal 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger through, inter alia, reducing by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger).

Food and commodity prices 2000-2009



Source: Farm Foundation (2009).[5]
Note: Commodity prices and indices are normalized to equal 1.0, on average, for 2002.

[2] FAO Newsroom, 19 June 2009: "1.02 billion people hungry: one sixth of humanity undernourished — more than ever before", available at http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/20568/icode/.

[3] Ibid.

[4] For detailed information, see http://www.undp.org/mdg/.

[5] Farm Foundation (2009), *What's Driving Food Prices*, Issue Report, March 2009 update; available at www.farmfoundation.org.

7. Commodity prices are notoriously volatile. However, notwithstanding short-term fluctuations, the long-term real price of food and other primary commodities showed a slight but steady decline over much of the twentieth century, interrupted by spikes during three exceptional periods — the two world wars and the commodity price shocks of the 1970s. As shown in the figure above, 2008 may be viewed, in retrospect, as the fourth such exceptional period; it saw a dramatic surge in the prices of all food grains, with wheat and corn doubling and rice tripling in price in less than two years, as well as in the prices of other key commodities, especially oil.

8. Analysts attribute the 2008 price surge to a combination of factors. First, although food demand has grown steadily because of a sustained economic boom and the especially rapid growth in China and India, prices remained low because of the high global grain stocks between 1998 and 2005. After 2005, however, grain and oilseed stocks were depleted rapidly because of a succession of poor harvests (in large part because of back-to-back droughts in Australia, one of the largest agricultural exporters in the world, in 2006 and 2007) and a large increase in biofuels production in the United States of America, mostly from corn used in ethanol. At the same time, the increase in vegetable-oil prices was the result of an increase in imports of vegetable oil and its use in ethanol in the European Union.[6] Production costs also rose because of higher energy and fertilizer prices and a declining dollar. Finally, prices were pushed up by subsequent export restrictions and commodity market speculation. Besides the short-term factors, experts also point to the chronic underinvestment in agriculture that has prevailed since the 1980s.

9. In the aftermath of the crisis, experts feared a recurrence in 2009 because of the potential impact of the financial crisis. There were fears that credit and liquidity could be squeezed during the sowing season (thus reducing planting by farmers who rely on loans to finance agricultural inputs), and that a shortfall in trade credit could affect demand for agricultural products from manufacturers, processors and producer cooperatives.[7] However, those fears have not been validated by subsequent data, and the outlook for world cereal supply and demand in 2009-2010 appears to be satisfactory, reflecting adequate planting, large carryover stocks and stagnant demand.[8]

B. Impact of the crisis

10. That price surge created a severe hunger crisis, as poor families, which were already spending as much as half of their incomes on food, were no longer able to afford adequate nutrition. Of particular concern is the situation of vulnerable countries — the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing States — and vulnerable social groups, including women, children, the elderly and poor households.

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[6] *Policy Research Working Paper*, No. 4682, "A note on rising food prices", by Donald Mitchell, World Bank, July 2008.

[7] Agro-food processors that often extended credit and accepted payment in future crop production have ceased this practice in many countries and Governments, for the most part, have not stepped in to provide credit or extension services to increase productivity. See *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2009-2018*, available at http://www.agri-outlook.org/dataoecd/2/31/43040036.pdf, p. 47.

[8] See *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2009-2018*, available at http://www.agri-outlook.org/dataoecd/2/31/43040036.pdf

11. Undernutrition is associated with a number of adverse impacts. One in three developing-country children under 5 years of age — a total of 178 million children — suffers stunting owing to chronic undernutrition and a poor-quality diet. Such children therefore have higher rates of illness and death, reduced cognitive ability and school performance, and lower adult productivity and lifetime earnings. Micronutrient malnutrition, including deficiencies of iron, protein, vitamin A, iodine and zinc, also known as "hidden hunger", affects more than 2 billion people — over 30 per cent of the world's population — and has serious public-health consequences.

12. The revival of food production and the replenishment of grain and oilseed stocks, combined with the trend reversal with respect to other factors that had contributed to the price surge — for instance, energy prices declined, the dollar regained some of its value, economic growth slowed down globally as well as in emerging economies, and some of the policies favouring biofuels were retired — have resulted in a sharp decline in food prices.

13. However, concerns remain. International grain prices are still 25 per cent higher than in 2005,[9] food prices in developing countries have not fallen as much as international prices,[10] and the outlook for the underlying factors is far from clear. Energy prices remain volatile, the trend value of the dollar is uncertain, demand for and supply of biofuels is rising, and the global economy may soon recover from the recession, thus stimulating demand once again. As a result, the international food system remains vulnerable.

14. Although prices have declined, the global economic recession is pushing households back into poverty and therefore sustaining food insecurity. This has affected the food security agenda in at least five ways. First, prices of developing-country exports are declining; agricultural raw materials prices are projected to fall by 15 per cent in 2009, and prices of metals and minerals by 26 per cent. Secondly, developing-country exports are projected to shrink by 2 to 3 per cent as global trade volumes contract by 9 per cent in 2009. Thirdly, financial inflows to developing countries are falling — foreign direct investment by 40 per cent, remittances by 5 to 8 per cent,[11] and official development assistance, which had already declined by 7 per cent in 2007, may fall further; official development assistance for agriculture had declined by 75 per cent between 1980 and 2005. Fourthly, per capita incomes are growing more slowly, or even falling; as global economic activity declines by about 1 per cent in 2009, the average developing-country growth rate will fall from 6 per cent in 2008 to 2 per cent in 2009. Finally, unemployment rates are rising, both as a result of the recession and because of reverse migration from industrialized countries.

C. Longer-term considerations

15. As noted above, the 2008 crisis was the result not only of a short-term confluence of factors, but also of the longer-term structural features of the food and agriculture sector. The current trends highlighted above suggest that, with regard to

[9] FAO, *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets* (draft), Rome, December 2008.

[10] Ibid.

[11] World Bank, Migration and Development Brief of 23 March 2009; available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/MD_Brief9_Mar2009.pdf.

many of those factors, there will be steady movement in an adverse direction. This poses additional policy challenges, and anticipatory action might be necessary.

Lack of investment

16. The most important factor is the chronic underinvestment in agriculture. In most countries, the level of investment in agriculture has declined since the 1980s. This is also reflected in a decline in the share of official development assistance for agriculture. The advocacy group Oxfam has called for raising official development assistance for agriculture, currently at $5 billion per year, at least to its 1980s level of $20 billion. The International Food Policy Research Institute has called for a doubling of public research and development in agriculture.

17. In most developing countries, agricultural research investments are stagnating or declining. The privatization of agricultural research in developed countries restricts access to proprietary technologies, limiting the possibility of capturing research spillovers from developed countries. In addition, many countries lack even a minimal national capacity for procuring, assessing, adapting and adopting scientific knowledge and technologies developed elsewhere. The need for increased and stable funding for agricultural research and extension is therefore crucial.

Small farmers

18. More broadly, of particular concern in this regard is the inadequate support provided to small farmers. The vast majority of the world's farms are small; 85 per cent of them are less than 2 hectares, and 97 per cent less than 10. In Africa, 80 per cent of farmed land is cultivated by smallholder farmers, the majority of whom are women.[12] Globally, the livelihoods of 2 billion people depend on the production capacity of the estimated 500 million small farms worldwide.[13] Yet smallholder farmers face a variety of constraints to sustainable livelihoods, including a lack of access to natural resources and agricultural inputs, poor advisory and other support services, fragile environments, remote locations, and weak community organization and political leverage. They often lack the necessary capacities to adapt to or reap the benefits of new technologies. This makes them highly vulnerable to shocks, including price volatility, health risks and natural hazards, and to climate variability.

19. Poverty is partially determined by constraints that limit farmers' ability to enter and compete in national, regional and global markets. The development of, and access to, markets requires a complex set of conditions involving not only farm production technology and transport infrastructure, but also — and especially in agriculture — the coordination of many different activities, services and institutions, including rural finance, input supply, assembly and distribution, grading, processing and retailing. In much of the world, those activities need to be sustained within the context of markets that are often volatile and unpredictable, in countries where there are weak governance and policy mechanisms for upholding the contracts, and in cultures where business trust is often heavily dependent upon personal relationships or kinship ties. Because of those challenges, as well as the usual risks and uncertainties associated with agricultural production itself, the private sector is often reluctant to invest in the complementary goods and services needed to link rural

[12] IFAD press release, 10 July 2009, available at http://www.ifad.org/media/press/advisory/2009/09.htm.

[13] IFAD press release, 18 February 2009, available at http://www.ifad.org/media/press/2009/9.htm.

producers with urban markets. In places where private agribusiness is more developed, poor producers often face unfavourable prices due to a lack of bargaining power, high transaction costs and difficulties in meeting quality standards.

Competing demands on resources

20. While global food demand continues to rise because of population growth as well as a change in consumption patterns resulting from income growth, the growth trend in agricultural productivity is too slow to keep up with demand. World population is projected to grow from 6.5 billion in 2005 to more than 9 billion by 2050, and indications are that the increase will take place entirely in developing countries.[14] Food production will have to at least double in order both to achieve food security for more than 1 billion hungry people and to ensure adequate food supplies to feed the additional population.[15]

21. However, there is not an infinite supply of the two main resources, water and land. There is at most 12 per cent more arable land available which is not forested or subject to erosion or desertification, and degradation of soils continues. Similarly, large areas of the world are already water-stressed, and further increases in water availability for agriculture cannot be ensured.[16]

22. More importantly, there is a demand for these two critical resources for other purposes as well, namely afforestation and non-food crops, in particular biofuels. Forested areas will need to expand rather than shrink, both to protect biodiversity and to address climate change. The demand for non-food crops will also increase along with population and income growth. The growing demand for biofuels as an alternative to fossil fuels is also beginning to divert land and water resources from food production. This juxtaposition of finite natural resources, steadily growing demand and competing uses calls for consensus policies on resource use as well as for a focused investment in productivity enhancement.

23. The rise in petrol prices has made biofuels an attractive alternative energy source. The potential demand for energy is so large that it could change the fundamentals of agricultural systems. Indeed, this may already have started to happen. In 2007, nearly 100 million tons of cereal, or 5 per cent of world output, were diverted from food markets to the energy sector,[17] but contributed less than 0.5 per cent in terms of meeting the global energy demand. The International Food Policy Research Institute has projected that if biofuel development proceeds at or exceeds its current pace, by 2020 per capita calorie availability will decline and child malnutrition will increase substantially, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.[18]

24. There is also a competition between domestic and export demand. Fears of future scarcities have led to large-scale land acquisitions by foreign countries and Governments. These generate investments but also increase the risk of future food

[14] United Nations press release, "World population will increase by 2.5 billion by 2050", 13 March 2007, available at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/pop952.doc.htm.

[15] Robert L. Thompson, "Malthus has been wrong for two centuries, but will he be in the 21st?: agricultural research holds the key", Centre for Global Development, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, http://cgs.illinois.edu/category/global-studies/agriculture-0.

[16] Ibid.

[17] FAO, 2009.

[18] See http://www.ifpri.org/themes/bioenergy/bioenergy.asp.

insecurity for the poor, as many countries do not have sufficient mechanisms to protect local rights and interests, especially those of women and indigenous peoples. A recent study undertaken by IFAD, FAO and the International Institute for Environment and Development[19] indicates that land-based investments have been rising over the past five years, with foreign investments dominating the trend but with significant domestic investment as well.

25. A third area of competition is water. In most developing countries, agriculture uses more than 80 per cent of water resources.[20] Competition for water from cities and industries progressively reduces water allocation for agriculture and puts additional pressure on food production. At the same time, many large irrigation infrastructures are old and inefficient and do not allow for a much-needed increase in agricultural water productivity.

Climate change

26. A final complicating factor is climate change, which could affect resource availability as well as factor productivity, notably through higher temperatures, greater rainfall variability and more frequent extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, floods and droughts. Climate projections indicate a potential for abrupt changes in rainfall patterns, greater frequency of droughts as well as floods, higher levels of moisture evaporation, loss of coastal lands, intrusion of salt water, migration of pest vectors, an increase in plant and animal diseases, and generalized adverse impacts on crop productivity.[21] By 2020 almost 50 million more people may be at greater risk of hunger as a direct consequence of climate change.[22] Rising global food prices could push that number much higher.

27. A potential grave outcome of the physical impacts of climate change is conflict over scarce land and water resources — within and among rural communities, and even among nations — and the migration of poor rural people from overstressed regions, which could export conflicts to other areas. The final impacts will depend on the level and types of investments that are made to improve agriculture's adaptive capacity and resilience and to adjust production methods to help mitigate climate-change effects.

III. Responding to the food security crisis and agricultural development challenges

28. The response to the food security crisis has therefore sought to address both of the dimensions noted above: the immediate need to ameliorate the condition of households and populations facing hunger and undernutrition, and the longer-term need to build resilience and overcome the structural conditions that perpetuate food insecurity. These responses are described below in four broad dimensions: a strategic framework for action; global actions; regional actions; and national actions.

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[19] See http://www.ifad.org/pub/land/land_grab.pdf.

[20] IFAD, "Linking land and water governance" (2006); available at http://www.ifad.org/events/water/flyer.pdf.

[21] FAO, 2009.

[22] United Nations Environment Programme, "Millions at risk of hunger and water stress in Asia unless global greenhouse emissions cut", 10 April 2007; available at http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?ArticleID=5551&DocumentID=504&l=en.

A. A strategic framework for action

29. The 2008 food crisis galvanized the global policy community in mobilizing political and financial support for ameliorative and constructive action. From the very outset, that action was based on a strategic framework developed under the auspices of the United Nations High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis. The Task Force was established in April 2008 to enable the United Nations system to adopt a coordinated, consolidated and coherent approach in its responses to the food security crisis.

30. In July 2008, the Task Force published the Comprehensive Framework for Action, which defines the common position of its members on the actions to be implemented in the short, medium and long term to deal with the crisis and to improve food and nutrition security at the national, regional and global levels.[23] The key contribution of the framework is the demarcation of two strategic areas of intervention, involving actions aimed, respectively, at addressing the immediate needs of vulnerable populations and at building resilience and contributing to global food and nutrition security. The framework makes it clear that both sets of actions are needed urgently, and it also advocates the strengthening of global information and monitoring systems.

31. With respect to the first track, the framework proposes (a) the enhancement of emergency food assistance, nutrition interventions and safety nets; (b) the boosting of smallholder farmer food production; (c) the adjustment of trade and tax policies; and (d) the management of macroeconomic implications. Similarly, on the second track, it advises that (a) social protection systems should be expanded; (b) smallholder farmer-led food availability growth should be sustained; (c) international food markets should be improved; and (d) an international biofuel consensus should be developed.

32. Subsequent policy decisions and global agreements have further refined and developed this comprehensive framework, most recently the agreement reached in May 2009 at the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development on the implementation of the sustainable development agenda in six thematic areas: agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

33. The Commission endorsed the strategic twin-track approach advanced by the Comprehensive Framework for Action and reiterated the framework recommendations on the first track (pertaining to the immediate needs of affected populations), especially the call for emergency food assistance and safety nets as well as support for small farmers. Furthermore, it called for such actions to be incorporated into an integrated approach that builds longer-term response capacity.

34. The Commission goes beyond earlier policies, including the Comprehensive Framework for Action, in developing this integrated strategic framework and in incorporating all actions into a strategy for building long-term resilience and addressing structural obstacles in a sustainable and equitable manner. It proposes a strategy that combines economic incentives and market development, an investment agenda, actions to promote environmental sustainability and integrated resource management, and social protection.

[23] Available at http://www.un.org/issues/food/taskforce/Documentation/CFA%20Web.pdf, pp. 5-26.

35. The salient features of this strategic framework include three sets of national actions (sustainable development strategies, a sustainable green revolution and social strategy), and four areas of international cooperation (financing; enhanced access to international markets, including through trade policy and assurance of price stability; cooperation in research and development; and enhancing policy coherence), as set out below.

National actions

36. The following national actions have been identified:

(a) *Sustainable development strategies*: the Commission, at its seventeenth session, urged Governments to incorporate the elements of the response to the food security agenda into the broader framework of national sustainable development strategies and poverty reduction programmes. This has a number of implications:

(i) *Participatory process*: national strategies involve a broad spectrum of stakeholders and major groups in the policy formulation process, through time-tested mechanisms;

(ii) *Sustainable resource management*: key existing programmes should be incorporated into the national strategies (and new programmes formulated where needed). These include, besides the core strategy of a sustainable green revolution, integrated strategies for sustainable land and water management, adaptation to drought, combating desertification, and improved monitoring (especially to reverse land degradation). Finally, it asks for the examination of the challenges as well as opportunities of biofuels in the context of sustainable development (including food security, energy security, and integrated resource management);

(iii) *Comprehensive rural development strategies*: these include building social capital, disseminating knowledge of best practices and market access, building social infrastructure and services, and creating employment opportunities;

(iv) *Policy instruments*: besides national sustainable development strategies, use of a number of policy tools — including assessment mechanisms (environmental impact assessments, social impact assessments, and strategic environmental assessments), valuation methods, ecological taxation, and monitoring systems — associated with sustainable development;

(v) *Climate change*: research and development on technical solutions as well as traditional knowledge of drought-tolerant seed varieties, drought forecasting, impact assessment, and early warning systems. Investment in agriculture can help in the mitigation of climate change;

(b) *Sustainable green revolution*: a green revolution that revitalizes agricultural sectors in developing countries by enhancing agricultural production, productivity and sustainability through the use of science-based approaches and local indigenous knowledge in a manner that protects and conserves natural resources, limits the use of scarce inputs and pollutants, and enhances the quality of natural resources. Key elements of the strategy are:

(i) *Investment in agriculture*: the reiteration of earlier decisions on increasing the share of investment in agriculture to 10 per cent of the total, in

particular, enhancing investment in (a) agricultural infrastructure; (b) research and development on crops as well as livestock, including sustainable as well as climate-friendly practices and incorporating indigenous knowledge; and (c) agricultural institutions, especially extension institutions, using modern information and communications technologies, and institutions for planning and monitoring;

(ii) *Support for market integration*: a number of actions to enable better access by small farmers and local entrepreneurs to national and global markets;

(iii) *Special programme for Africa*: the green revolution of the 1960s and 1970s largely bypassed Africa. Support for the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is needed to ensure that this time the continent will benefit from the latest scientific research, and not at the expense of ecological services, cultural arrangements or indigenous knowledge. It includes higher investment in agricultural infrastructure, institutions, research and development, education and extension, and rural development, in order to integrate African farmers and local entrepreneurs into agricultural supply chains and global trade. Also needed are the reduction of the debt burden, addressing income distribution and promoting rural development, and support for climate adaptation;

(c) *Social strategy*: as an integral element of the national sustainable development strategy and as a complement to the sustainable green revolution programme, the social strategy seeks to provide social protection through policy measures, infrastructure investment and institutional development and capacity-building in four areas:

(i) *Social protection*: investment in basic social services (health and education) for farming communities, building institutions for social protection, recognizing and giving substance to the right to food, ensuring food quality, improving information provision and insurance, strengthening the capacity for disaster management, and building capacity for effective risk management;

(ii) *Enhanced support for small farmers*: technical assistance to small farmers and women farmers;

(iii) *Land tenure protection*: secure and equitable access to land and land tenure is a key component of a sustainable agricultural strategy. It is also essential to protecting poor and vulnerable groups and enhancing the role of rural women (both to raise agricultural production and to ensure household food security);

(iv) *Social capital and scaling up of best practices*: a number of "best practices" have failed to be utilized on a significant scale. These include, for example, measures for soil and water conservation, decreasing post-harvest losses (which can be as high as 30 per cent), integrated pest management, community development and social mobilization, and benefiting from market opportunities. Appropriate policy and extension measures can take these practices to scale.

International cooperation

37. The following areas of international cooperation have been identified:

(a) *Financing*: the Commission, at its seventeenth session, called for donors to meet all earlier official development assistance commitments and to provide adequate, predictable and timely financial resources for a sustainable green revolution, with a particular emphasis on Africa (including a reduction of the debt burden), the programme of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (including support from the Global Environment Facility), countries undertaking governance reforms, support for sustainable consumption and production patterns and the mainstreaming of sustainable agriculture strategies, as well as climate change strategies and actions, into poverty-reduction strategies and national development programmes;

(b) *International trade and price stability*: the Commission also called for a successful and timely conclusion to the Doha Round and for the promotion of an equitable multilateral trading system;

(c) *Cooperation in research and development*: the outcome of the session also includes a number of decisions to support research and development, with particular reference to the research capacities of developing countries in rural development and sustainable agriculture (including organic agriculture, sustainable biobased products, the management of invasive species, and land resource systems), information and monitoring systems (e.g., utilizing climatic information, including before, during and after drought, and guidelines for the development of drought indices), international agricultural research systems (especially the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research system), and the exchange and transfer of information on technologies and best practices;

(d) *Policy coherence*: the Commission called for enhancing coherence between and within various instruments of international cooperation, better coordination and coherence among the United Nations agencies, including among the three Rio Conventions, and for effective follow-up on the implementation of the decisions taken at the Commission's seventeenth session.

38. Taken together, these decisions provide a coherent and manageable framework for addressing both strands of the food security agenda. The actions taken thus far towards translating this vision into reality are set out below.

B. Actions taken at the global level

39. Food security and sustainable development remain high on the international political agenda. Many Governments, donors and development partners have undertaken new commitments to re-engage in the agricultural sector, increase investments in agriculture and rural development and enhance food production to achieve food security and improve nutrition for all. However, the results achieved thus far have not been sufficient to attain the agreed goals. As called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/235, these efforts are briefly reviewed in the present report, together with an analysis of their impact, where possible.

Meeting financing needs

40. The FAO High-level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy, held in June 2008, estimates the total annual needs for achieving agricultural development and food security to be of the order of $30 billion, including (a) $2.9 billion per year for improving agricultural productivity and enhancing livelihoods and food security in poor rural communities; (b) $9.5 billion per year for developing and conserving natural resources; (c) $10 billion per year for expanding rural infrastructure (including capacity for food safety, plant and animal health) and broadening market access; (d) $1.43 billion per year for strengthening the capacity for knowledge generation and dissemination; and (e) $6.6 billion per year for ensuring access to food for the neediest through safety nets and other direct assistance.

41. Although the Conference was not intended to be a pledging event, several donor countries and international financial organizations announced significant additional financial support totalling more than $12 billion.

42. As a follow-up, the Government of Spain hosted a High-level Meeting on Food Security for All in Madrid in January 2009. The meeting envisioned a framework for a global partnership for food security; brought together Governments, regional bodies, civil society, businesses, international agencies, development banks and donors; and also led to financial pledges. As of June 2009, Spain had made good on its first commitment of €1 billion for 17 West African countries. However, concerns remain that other pledges have yet to materialize.

43. In July 2009, the Group of Eight, meeting in L'Aquila, Italy, recognized that the combined effect of long-standing underinvestment in agriculture and food security, price trends and the economic crisis have led to increased hunger, and agreed to commit more than $20 billion to agriculture over the next three years as part of a food security initiative,[24] in addition to pledging formally to reverse the tendency of decreasing official development aid and national financing to agriculture.[25]

44. The FAO Council decided to organize a World Summit on Food Security from 16 to 18 November 2009 in order to revisit earlier commitments and keep the challenge of food insecurity at the top of the international agenda.

The United Nations system: implementing the Comprehensive Framework for Action

45. Over the past 12 months, members of the High-level Task Force have provided support to national authorities on both strands of the Comprehensive Framework for Action, namely, safety nets and food assistance, as well as longer-term support to improve production and increase resilience to price volatility and external shocks. Some of the actions taken are outlined below:[26]

[24] See http://www.un-foodsecurity.org/node/22.

[25] *Financial Times*, 6 July 2009, available at http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/60720902-6992-11de-bc9f-00144feabdc0.html.

[26] Outline of progress against the July 2008 Comprehensive Framework for Action, High-level Task Force secretariat, July 2009.

(a) FAO and IFAD assisted small farmers during the fall planting seasons and are supporting programmes aiming at strengthening their capacities. FAO has been promoting national and regional programmes for food security since 2002 as instruments that help countries enhance productivity and diversify the livelihoods of rural people on a scale sufficient to attain the 2015 targets set by the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) WFP organized what is perhaps the largest ever emergency scale-up of food assistance operations, reaching over 100 million people. The organization is now increasingly purchasing locally produced food for its operations and school feeding programmes (the "Purchase for Progress" initiative);

(c) The World Bank has intensified investment operations through a Global Food Crisis Response Programme with a focus on the rapid disbursement of assistance so as to address immediate needs through budget support, social protection programmes and support for the agricultural sector. A total of $780 million (70 per cent of approved funds) has been disbursed within a year;

(d) The United Nations Children's Fund has intensified its focus on responses to the nutritional impact of the combined food and economic crises;

(e) The United Nations Development Programme has helped Governments to address the critical interrelationships among food systems, social protection, rural development and poverty reduction; and also, as the coordinating agency, responses in selected countries;

(f) The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has set aside $100 million within the Central Emergency Response Fund to respond to the food crisis;

(g) The International Monetary Fund plugged balance-of-payment gaps for low-income countries suffering from food price shocks and provided advice on appropriate macroeconomic policy responses;

(h) The High-level Task Force secretariat assisted in the leveraging of donor funding, including support for the establishment of the €1 billion European Union Food Facility, supporting country-level coordination in 35 of the 60 countries on which the Task Force focuses;

(i) The World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development are providing a platform for discussion and action on the elimination of distorting subsidies, which is essential for the establishment of a fair trade environment for poor countries;

(j) The International Labour Organization has drawn attention to the creation of jobs, occupational safety nets and health, entrepreneurship and issues of child labour and gender rights as essential elements of an integrated strategy for food security and sustainable agricultural development;

(k) Members of the High-level Task Force have begun to incorporate a "rights perspective" in this agenda, with reference to the Right to Food Guidelines (*Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to*

Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security), and the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the right to food;[27]

(l) Finally, as noted in paragraph 34 above, the seventeenth session of the Commission has provided an integrated framework for pursuing the food and agriculture agenda in a sustainable and equitable manner.

C. Regional initiatives and actions

46. A number of actions in support of the agenda have been undertaken by regional institutions.

Africa

47. The NEPAD-coordinated Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme is an Africa-owned and Africa-led initiative to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty through investment in agriculture. African Governments agreed, under the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa, to increase public investment in agriculture to a minimum of 10 per cent of their national budgets and achieve the target of increasing agricultural growth to 6 per cent per annum. This is to be achieved on the basis of four key pillars: extending the area under sustainable land management; improving rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for market access; increasing food supply and reducing hunger; and investing in agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption.[28]

48. NEPAD, the regional economic communities, the African Union and a number of African and donor Governments are working together to mobilize support for the CAADP Multi-donor Trust Fund, hosted at the World Bank.

49. In preparation for the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, African ministers convened a high-level meeting on the theme "African agriculture in the twenty-first century" in February 2009 in Windhoek. The meeting called for a sustainable green revolution in Africa and the integration of African agriculture into global markets. It also addressed climate adaptation, support for small-scale and women farmers, securing market access and capacity-building.

50. The thirteenth ordinary session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in Sirte, Libya, in July 2009 addressed the theme "Investing in agriculture for economic growth and food security" and featured renewed commitments to CAADP as well as discussions on climate change, regional agriculture trade, investment financing and pro-poor initiatives for rural development.

Asia-Pacific

51. In December 2008, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Government of Indonesia convened a high-level policy dialogue on the theme "The food-fuel Crisis and climate change: reshaping the

[27] Ibid.

[28] CAADP annual report 2008, available at http://www.caadp.net/pdf/CAADP%20Annual%20report%202008.pdf.

Development Agenda". More than 100 policymakers called for regional cooperation to support countries facing balance-of-payments difficulties.[29]

52. In August 2008, in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the Ministers of Agriculture of the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) discussed an ASEAN integrated food security framework specifying policy responses in four areas: strengthening food security, promoting better food markets and trade, strengthening integrated food security information systems, and agricultural innovation. That same month, the fifteenth summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) issued the Colombo Declaration on Food Security, which called for a road map for agriculture development and food security and the preparation of the SAARC Agriculture Perspective 2020. It also directed the operationalization of a 2-million-ton SAARC food bank to provide a regional reserve during food emergencies.

Latin America

53. In the rural areas of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) countries (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay), the poorest and most vulnerable people are landless peasants, poor smallholder farmers, women, young people and ethnic minorities.[30] IFAD, in collaboration with Governments and farmers, has contributed to the development of the Commission on Family Farming MERCOSUR, the regional platform of family farmers' organizations, and a model for policy dialogue and South-South cooperation. Many of the interventions seek to increase investment in agriculture and rural development across all aspects of the production cycle; strengthen national capacities for policy response to rural poverty; foster private-sector involvement in agricultural services; and promote agricultural research.

D. Actions implemented at the national level

54. Considerable evidence shows that it is possible to increase crop yields of smallholder farmers, reduce poverty and enhance food security through concerted national agricultural and rural development programmes (see box 2). In India, cereal yields are 2.5 times greater than they were 40 years ago, and China doubled crop yields on smallholder agriculture in a decade and helped to move 400 million people out of poverty. Smallholders in Viet Nam transformed that country from a net importer of rice to one of the world's biggest exporters. In Africa, between 2003 and 2005, 13 countries achieved annual agricultural growth rates greater than 5 per cent.[31]

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[29] *Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in Asia and the Pacific*, ESCAP, 2009, available at http://www.unescap.org/65/documents/Theme-Study/st-escap-2535.pdf.

[30] "IFAD in the MERCOSUR area", IFAD, December 2008, available at http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/PL/factsheet/mercosur_e.pdf.

[31] International Food Policy Research Institute, Policy Brief No. 009, "Sustaining and accelerating Africa's agricultural growth recovery in the context of changing global food prices" (November 2008); available at http://www.ifpri.org/PUBS/bp/bp009.asp.

Box 2

Examples of successful sustainable agriculture practices

Africa

- *Burkina Faso*: Soil and water conservation in the drylands have reduced land degradation and increased crop yields. The average farm family shifted from a cereal deficit of 650 kg to a surplus of 150 kg per year
- *Kenya*: Soil fertility management using a range of biological pest-management methods together with legumes, cover crops and green manures have doubled beans and groundnut yields from 300 to 600 kg/hectare (ha)
- *Nigeria*: Alley crops of *Gliricidia* and *Leucaena* reduced soil erosion by 73 and 83 per cent, respectively
- *Ethiopia*: In low-rainfall areas, reduced tillage without chemical fertilizer increased gross crop revenue by $106 per hectare compared with conventional tillage without chemical fertilizers, and $13 per ha compared to conventional tillage with chemical fertilizers. The impact was less significant ($6 per ha) in high-rainfall areas

Asia

- *Viet Nam*: Contour planting of hedgerows on sloping lands reduced soil loss from 18 to 7.4 tons/ha/year
- *Pakistan*: Yields of citrus fruits increased by 150 to 200 per cent after the adoption of such sustainable agriculture practices as mulching, no-till production and composting

Latin America

- *Honduras and Guatemala*: 45,000 families have increased crop yields from 400 to 600 kg/ha to 2,000 to 2,500 kg/ha using green manures, cover crops, contour grass strips, in-row tillage, rock bunds and animal manures
- *Brazil*: Soil and water conservation using contour grass barriers, contour ploughing and green manures has raised maize yields from 3 to 5 tons/ha and soybeans from 2.8 to 4.7 tons/ha in Santa Catarina, Paraná and Rio Grande do Sul
- *Bolivia (Plurinational State of)*: Some 2,000 farmers have improved potato yields from 4 to 10-15 tons/ha by using green manure

Sources: Pretty et al. 2003; Graves et al. 2004, Kassie et al. (2008 and 2009), Third World Network, 2008, International Food Policy Research Institute, Policy Brief No. 009, "Sustaining and accelerating Africa's agricultural growth recovery in the context of changing global food prices" (November 2008).

55. While the entire range of recommendations regarding an integrated framework for sustainable agricultural development and food security are far from having been adopted universally, developing-country Governments are giving higher priority to incorporating food-security objectives into development strategies. A number of significant interventions are listed below.

56. With respect to tenure rights, IFAD is exploring a number of approaches aimed at increasing access to land and securing land tenure for poor rural producers. In some cases, poor producers were provided long-term access to degraded land together with support for rehabilitation. In Nepal, for example, transfers of degraded forest land on renewable 40-year leases has reduced poverty and generated reforestation of hills. Outgrower arrangements (namely, the opening up of Government-owned estate lands to former estate workers and poor farmers) in Sri Lanka have also shown promise.

57. An IFAD-supported project in Sao Tome and Principe enabled smallholder farmers to gain access to the European market for organic cocoa, and, as a result, saw their yearly income increase by an average of 30 per cent.

58. As concerns resilience to price shocks, since 2007 many countries have implemented policies aimed at mitigating the impact of higher food prices and countering the impacts of the economic recession. Those policy responses have varied in nature and effectiveness, though they generally build on existing policy measures. A FAO-led survey carried out in May 2008 of policy responses in 77 countries showed that about half the countries had reduced or eliminated cereal import duties; 55 per cent had introduced price controls or consumer subsidies; one quarter had introduced some form of export restrictions, including taxes; and roughly the same proportion had taken measures to increase supply, drawing on cereal stocks. Only 16 per cent of the countries surveyed had implemented no policy responses whatsoever.[32]

59. Similarly, an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) study shows similar results for non-OECD Governments, with 45 countries reducing tariffs; 31 countries imposing export restrictions; 22 countries introducing price controls; 47 countries using food subsidies or tax rebates or releasing stocks to lower prices; one fifth of the countries establishing grain buffer stocks; 3 countries scaling up existing targeted cash-transfer programmes; and 15 countries introducing donor-supported resilience packages.[33]

[32] FAO, *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets* (draft), Rome, December 2008.

[33] *Agricultural Policies in OECD Countries: Monitoring and Evaluation 2009*.

Box 3

Policy responses to agricultural price fluctuations in selected countries

Indonesia

National action plan introduced in December 2008 to respond to the food-fuel and financial crises, including: (a) short-term: food subsidy, cash transfers, reduced import tariff, reduced value-added tax and subsidized soybean price to small processors; and (b) medium-term: subsidized fertilizers, farm credits with subsidized interest, guaranteed farm gate price, domestic food stocks.

Russian Federation

A series of measures were adopted at the beginning of 2009 to facilitate financing for agriculture: (a) budgetary funds for the capitalization of the two largest agriculture banks; (b) federal funds for subsidizing interest on agricultural loans; (c) extending the repayment periods for certain subsidized loans; and (d) including agricultural enterprises in the list of key national enterprises eligible to receive Government guarantees on borrowings.

Brazil

Increased obligatory share of sight deposits in rural banks and savings systems exclusively for agricultural lending; and increased budgetary allocations for preferential credit to agriculture.

Source: Agricultural Policies in OECD Countries: Monitoring and Evaluation 2009.

IV. Sustainable agricultural development: the way forward

60. **The food crisis of 2008 has drawn welcome attention to the long-existing problem of hunger and food insecurity. In the past, this problem was addressed largely through fragmented, piecemeal efforts. The time has come to address it systematically, strategically and effectively.**

61. **The global policy community has produced a range of analyses and agreements that provide a way forward towards an effective and powerful response to the crisis. These range from the strategic framework advanced initially under the Comprehensive Framework for Action and refined and developed more fully by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventeenth session. The decision by the latter in particular sought to ensure that the response to the crisis would be integrated into mainstream decision-making and would provide synergies rather than conflicts with other crucial policy goals: poverty reduction, environmental protection, productivity enhancement, social protection and risk management, and the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. There has been concerted support for the strategic framework, including in the form of financial pledges and the expression of commitments at the highest political levels. The task is now to convert that vision into practice.**

62. The strategic framework includes two planks — the immediate plank of ameliorating the situation of households affected by the recent series of crises, and the longer-term plank of building resilience against future shocks and ensuring the ability to sustain food security over a range of future scenarios. These two strategies are not independent from each other or from mainstream development strategies. Rather, they are of sufficient importance to be undertaken as a single comprehensive strategy.

63. The short-term actions are well known and include ensuring a sufficient food supply for poor households through social safety nets, cash transfers, price management, targeted subsidies and social empowerment. Medium- to long-term actions should promote the achievement of food security through the reinforcement of sustainable agricultural development. This includes enhanced investment in productive agricultural and rural infrastructure and the creation of an enabling environment for both public and private investment; investment in research, extension and education systems in order to make scientific knowledge and best practices available to the broader rural community, especially small farmers and women; investing in infrastructure, institutions and policies that ensure market access for farmers, especially small farmers and women, from developing countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa, as well as small island developing States and least developed countries; investing in a range of agricultural institutions, including those for agricultural policy, research, extension, education, credit and the supply of inputs, and for the sustainable management of natural resources (especially soils and water); the strengthening of oversight institutions, including those responsible for providing social safety nets, for the protection of land tenure rights, for information collection on climate, disasters, vulnerability, water, soils and poverty; investment in the social capital and collective capacity of rural communities; and investment in the technical capacity of government agencies as well as community organizations and pro-poor organizations.

64. This agenda requires concerted support from the international community in the form of stable and predictable financial support, coordinated investment in research and development and knowledge-sharing, including through the use of information and communications technology, the creation of a fair and open trading system that provides developing-country farmers with access to world markets and supply chains, technology transfer and ensuring policy coherence between various international cooperation instruments.

65. The review of the current situation presented above suggests that countries are making efforts to implement such a strategy, albeit with varying degrees of commitment and success, and still at some distance from the vision of an integrated strategy. Some of these actions are meant to intensify ongoing efforts, while others are being implemented to encounter the emerging challenges. These recommendations, rooted as they are in the outcome documents of global forums, represent the consensus view of the global community with respect to the achievement of food security, including sustainable agricultural development, and the reduction of hunger and poverty. The time has come to put this consensus vision into practice.

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Sustainable development

Sustainable mountain development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 62/196, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-fourth session on the status of sustainable development in mountain regions. The report describes the status of sustainable mountain development at the national and international levels, including an overall analysis of the challenges that lie ahead, and provides suggestions for consideration by the Assembly as to how to continue to promote and effectively sustain development in mountain regions around the world within the existing policy context, including chapter 13 of Agenda 21, the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation") and the Millennium Development Goals.

* A/64/150.

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I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 53/24, in which it proclaimed 2002 the International Year of Mountains. The resolution encouraged Governments, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Year in order to increase awareness of the importance of sustainable mountain development. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) prepared a report on the achievements of the year, which was transmitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General (see A/58/134).

2. The International Year of Mountains in 2002 built on chapter 13 of Agenda 21, which focuses on mountain issues, and was dedicated to protecting mountain ecosystems and improving the well-being of mountain people. The Year acted as a catalyst for long-term, effective action to implement chapter 13: it achieved much by raising awareness of the importance of mountains to life and the need to improve mountain environments and the livelihoods of mountain people; supported the establishment of 78 national committees for country-level action; and strengthened partnerships with stakeholders in mountain issues, which culminated in the launch of the Mountain Partnership at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002.

3. The Year also led to the adoption of resolution 57/245, in which the General Assembly designated 11 December as International Mountain Day, as from 2003, and encouraged the international community to organize events at all levels on that day to highlight the importance of sustainable mountain development. The General Assembly recommended that the provision of development assistance to poor mountain countries should be included in the current agenda of the General Assembly. It was also suggested that debt relief be considered an important means of fighting poverty in those regions.

4. In its resolution 59/238, the General Assembly decided to consider at its sixtieth session, under the agenda item entitled "Sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Rendering assistance to poor mountain countries to overcome obstacles in socio-economic and ecological areas". In accordance with resolution 58/216, the Secretary-General submitted a report entitled "Sustainable mountain development" (A/60/309) to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

5. In its resolution 60/198, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-second session on the status of sustainable development in mountain regions under a sub-item entitled "Sustainable mountain development" of the item entitled "Sustainable development". A report entitled "Sustainable mountain development" (A/62/292) was prepared and submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session.

6. The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 62/196, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-fourth session on the status of sustainable development in mountain regions, under item 55 (b) of the provisional agenda. It was prepared by FAO in collaboration with Governments, relevant agencies of the United Nations system and other organizations. There was a high response rate to requests for information on progress achieved, but the restriction on reporting length has not made it possible to accommodate all of the valuable input, which are now available from http://www.fao.org/forestry/57504/en/.

II. Background and challenges

7. There is increasing awareness that mountains are fragile ecosystems that are of global importance as the source of most of the Earth's freshwater, repositories of rich biological diversity, popular destinations for recreation and tourism and areas of important cultural diversity, knowledge and heritage. Covering about one quarter of the world's land surface, mountains provide a direct life-support base for about 12 per cent of the world population, as well as essential goods and services to more than half of humankind. Yet many of the world's most impoverished and food-insecure people live in mountain regions. Consequently, there is a need to ensure the ecological health and the economic and social improvement of mountain areas for the sake of both mountain inhabitants and people living in lowland areas.

8. Awareness of the importance of mountain ecosystems and communities has increased since the adoption of chapter 13 of Agenda 21, entitled "Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development". Commitment and will were strengthened during the International Year of Mountains in 2002, and mountains have gained an increasingly high profile on agendas at all levels. The World Summit on Sustainable Development resulted in the adoption of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, paragraph 42 of which describes actions required to address sustainable development of mountain regions and, along with chapter 13 of Agenda 21, it serves as the overall policy framework for sustainable mountain development.

9. Despite increased recognition of mountain issues and tangible results, significant constraints remain to alleviating poverty, averting environmental degradation and attaining sustainable development in mountain regions in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

10. Seven years on from the International Year of Mountains, many of the challenges remain. Mountain communities and their environments are still vulnerable to growing demands for water and other natural resources, expanding tourism, greater rates of out-migration, disproportionate incidences of conflict and the pressures of industry, mining and agriculture in an increasingly globalized world. The global economic slowdown, paired with soaring food prices, has dramatically increased the number of hungry and undernourished people, and mountain people are particularly vulnerable to food shortages. The threats and consequences of climate change are providing new challenges for mountains and mountain people that require urgent attention and concerted efforts to resolve. There is a clear need for higher levels of funding and investment in mountain areas, enhanced coordination and collaboration, and a stronger enabling environment with more supportive laws, policies and institutions.

III. National action

11. Action at the national level is a key factor in achieving progress in sustainable mountain development. In recent years there has been a steady increase of activities and initiatives and support from the international community, which have fostered the implementation of strategies, including enabling policies, within the framework of national development plans. As it is beyond the scope of the present report to describe the multitude of activities undertaken by countries, the following section

provides selected examples and highlights of actions being taken at the national level for the sustainable development of mountain regions.

Africa

12. In Algeria, the Ministry of Land Planning, Environment and Tourism is implementing an integrated management approach to foster socio-economic activities and protect fragile ecosystems in the region of Hauts Plateaux and to promote the sustainable land planning and management of the natural corridor from the coastal zone to the high plains, which has a wealth of natural resources and is of great economic importance.

13. In Morocco, several government agencies are launching a project in the Tatiouine basin of Khenifra province to assist key stakeholders in combating desertification through forest plantations and the implementation of an integrated and collaborative watershed management approach. The project, implemented by FAO, is a component of an interregional programme funded by the Government of Spain. The Government of Morocco, with support from the Technical Cooperation Programme of FAO and the Mountain Products Programme (within the context of the Mountain Partnership), is implementing a project for the production of saffron in the Anti-Atlas mountains. Working in one of the least developed regions of the country with the local non-governmental organization, Migration et développement, and the Slow Food movement, the project is generating valuable information regarding the technical, social and economic aspects of production and processing, as well as a comprehensive overview of the entire saffron value chain.

14. In Uganda, several mountain projects are being implemented. The Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme aims to improve livelihoods and alleviate poverty by creating opportunities of payments for environmental services in the context of mitigation/adaptation to climate change. The programme, which is active in Kenya and Uganda, was formulated by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and is co-financed by the Governments of Norway and Sweden. The Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Environmental Management Project, which is funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, contributes to sound watershed management, the sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity conservation in this mountain ecosystem.

Asia

15. In 2009, Kyrgyzstan adopted a new law that radically changed the pasture management system in the country by transferring the responsibility for pasture management to local users. With support from the CAMP Alatoo project on sustainable pasture management, funded by German Technical Cooperation, pasture committees were established in three pilot territorial self-government areas at the watershed level of the Jergetal and Ottuk Rivers in northern Kyrgyzstan.

16. In Lebanon, several projects are dealing with water and soil conservation in mountain areas, for example, the El Qaa watershed project and the United Nations Development Programme funded project on "Flood risk management and water harvesting for livelihood recovery in Baalbeck-Hermel, which aims to reverse land degradation and desertification through water harvesting techniques, as well as to restore vegetation cover and better land management practices.

17. In Nepal, the Ministry of Agriculture is implementing a project, with support from FAO, to promote national and local capacities for disaster preparedness and climate risk management in the agricultural sector. The project works in four districts and demonstrates location-specific technologies for climate and disaster risk management at community levels.

18. Medium-term rehabilitation efforts are ongoing in the earthquake-affected areas of Pakistan. For example, the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority is implementing a project, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency with technical support from FAO, which focuses on improving local livelihoods, institutional capacity-building and control of hydrogeological hazards through collaborative watershed management at the village level.

19. In the Philippines, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources launched a comprehensive upland development programme in 2007 linking food security and poverty reduction to income-generating activities based on wood and non-wood forest products. In 2009, the focus has been on the environmental services provided by vital watersheds, protection forests and protected areas.

20. Since 2008, the Government of Turkey has been implementing a pilot project, supported by FAO, aimed at building the capacity in modern approaches to sustainable mountain development in the Yuntdagi Mountains, Manisa Province, and at mainstreaming sustainable mountain development in the national planning process.

Europe

21. In Italy, the project "Agro-ecological assessment of permanent grasslands" in the Valtellina Valley identifies the interrelations between the grassland ecosystem, local development strategies and other socio-economic thrusts, in order to assess the sustainability of local farming activities and future pressure over natural resources. The Italian National Union of Mountain Municipalities, Communities and Authorities is promoting employment opportunities, innovation, entrepreneurship and investment growth in fields such as renewable energy in mountain communities. In 2009, the World Heritage Committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared the Dolomites, in the northern Italian Alps, a World Heritage Site.

22. In southern Poland, sustainable mountain development is receiving continuous and increasing attention. FAO, with strong collaboration of non-governmental organizations, supported a project in the Sudety Mountains, which promoted the inclusion of specific needs and concerns relevant to mountains in the strategic planning for the development of six mountain provinces in Poland.

23. The Jungfrau-Aletsch World Heritage Site in the Swiss Alps is noted for its comprehensive knowledge system covering environmental, socio-economic and cultural data. The system includes a long-term research and monitoring concept established by the site's management centre with support from the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern.

Latin America

24. Since 2005, the Committee for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions of Argentina has been very active on both the national and international fronts. A large number of ministries, universities and non-governmental organizations are represented in the Committee, which is currently undergoing a decentralization process to effectively meet the needs of the different mountain areas and ranges in Argentina. The Committee recently established thematic groups to discuss and identify activities and projects to be implemented. It has played an active role in the launch and consolidation of the Andean Mountain Partnership Initiative.

25. In 2008, the Protected Areas Management and Environment Office in Chile established the glaciers and mountains programme, coordinated by the Corporación Nacional Forestal. Sixty per cent of the glaciers in South America are in Chile, and the Government issued a national policy on glaciers in 2009 in order to protect them. In 2008, the Directorate General of Water established the Unit of Glaciology and Snow in order to create a national programme for glaciological survey and study as well as to monitor the glaciers' territory.

26. In 2008, Ecuador adopted a new Constitution which focuses attention on environmental conservation and natural resources, especially water and fragile ecosystems, including mountains. The Ministry of Environment developed policies regarding the Andean Páramos ecosystems, wetlands, forests and agrobiodiversity. The Government has requested FAO support to launch the project entitled "Poverty, Desertification and Integrated Watershed Management" (a component of an interregional programme funded by the Government of Spain) in Porto Viejo, province of Manabi, to expand integrated watershed management programmes and improve livelihoods in pilot watersheds affected by desertification and degradation. In addition, FAO has approved a Technical Cooperation Programme project for the integrated sustainable development of a mountain area managed by a local community.

27. In Guatemala, the Forest Incentive Programme and the Smallholder Forestry and Agroforestry Vocation Incentive Programme promote mechanisms for environmental services and public goods provided by natural and planted mountain forests. The $12 million investment enabled the reforestation of bare mountain slopes and the conservation of natural forests, benefiting more than 350,000 people. The National Forest Institute, in collaboration with several municipalities, is implementing the Project for Strengthening Municipal and Communal Forestry, which is aimed at decentralizing administration and management of mountain forest resources, and at fostering participatory processes involving local communities and government.

28. The Government of Mexico, through the National Forest Commission is implementing a project funded by the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility to improve the environmental services that forests provide at the local (water supply) and global (biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration) levels, by strengthening the payment for environmental services schemes currently implemented and developing new local mechanisms. In 2008, 25,000 hectares of forest and upland have were placed under protective management, thanks to 36 million pesos paid by service users and 36 million pesos paid by the National Forest Commission.

29. Peru has continued its efforts to promote sustainable mountain development at all levels. It played a key role in the observance of the International Year of the Potato, 2008. A global conference on the theme "Potato science for the poor" was organized in Cuzco in 2008, aimed at tapping the potato's potential in promoting agriculture, economy and food security, especially in the world's poorest countries. Together with Argentina, Peru promoted the development of the Andean Mountain Partnership Initiative.

IV. International action

A. Thematic initiatives

Biodiversity conservation and mountain ecosystems

30. In 2004, the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Programme of Work on mountain biological diversity to reduce significantly the loss of mountain biological diversity by 2010 at the global, regional and national levels. The Programme of Work promotes the ability of mountain ecosystems to provide goods and services needed for human well-being, poverty alleviation and meeting the Millennium Development Goals. Out of 98 reporting countries, 73 per cent reported having taken measures to prevent and mitigate the negative impact of key threats to mountain biodiversity. A joint Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity, aimed at implementation of the Programme of Work on mountain biological diversity.

31. In 2008, six countries of the Dinaric Arc Ecoregion (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) joined forces to protect their rich natural heritage by building an effective network of protected areas. This major commitment originated in the recognition that the natural and cultural wealth of the Dinaric region is a critical asset on which social and economic development can be based, and in the awareness that protecting this natural and cultural wealth can be achieved only with close cooperation among the Dinaric countries.

32. The Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment Programme of DIVERSITAS contributes to policy on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in mountain regions. In cooperation with the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, it encourages a global effort to build biodiversity databases on mountain organisms, in order to achieve a better understanding of mountain biodiversity and predict its changes. In 2008, the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment Programme organized a workshop on the theme "Data mining for global trends in mountain biodiversity" and a joint workshop with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development on the theme "Linking geodata with biodiversity information in the Himalayas". the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment Programme also coordinates a worldwide network of field experiments on land use and biodiversity in steep mountain terrain. Projects are under way in the Bolivian Altiplano, central Caucasus (Georgia), European Alps (Austria, France and Switzerland) and the Himalayas (China).

33. An international conference on the theme "Mountains of the world: ecology, conservation and sustainable development" was held in Oman in 2008. The

conference resulted in a set of recommendations for action in the highly sensitive and vitally important arid and semi-arid mountain ecosystems. The Mountain Partnership Secretariat at FAO is working actively with members, including the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, to follow up on the conference's recommendations and to facilitate collaborative action to promote an agenda for dry mountain regions.

Climate change

34. As the rapid retreat of glaciers is demonstrating worldwide, mountains are early indicators of climate change. It is vital to study and monitor the biological, physical and environmental health of mountains in an effort to better understand, manage and mitigate the negative effects of climate change.

35. In 2008, the Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Vienna, in partnership with several institutions and with the support of the Government of Italy, organized a conference on the theme "Mountains as early indicators of climate change". An account of the proceedings was published in 2009.

36. The Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments aims to establish and maintain a site-based network for the long-term surveillance of the impacts of climate change on fragile alpine ecosystems and biodiversity in high mountain systems around the world. Through resurveys at intervals of 5 to 10 years, changes in species cover and composition can be linked directly to continuously measured temperature series. The network currently comprises more than 50 teams working in 70 mountain regions distributed over five continents. The internationally standardized methodology and the rapidly growing number of observation sites build the foundation for a global indicator on warming-induced losses of biodiversity in alpine environments.

37. The Ev-K^2-CNR (Italian National Research Council) Committee, which promotes scientific and technological research in mountain areas, has researched variations in the surface area of glaciers around Mount Everest during the second half of the twentieth century through comparison of historical maps. The comparison reveals an overall decrease in glacier area (by 5 per cent), a result which is in line with the area reductions found by other studies of glaciers in Asia. The Stations at High Altitude for Research on the Environment project, initiated by the Ev-K^2-CNR Committee, promotes multidisciplinary research activities related to climate change on the atmosphere, glaciology, energy and water cycle, limnology, biodiversity and natural resources, and medicine.

38. The Mountain Research Initiative supported the efforts of the Cordillera Forest Dynamics Network to understand the impact of climate change on Cordilleran forests. It organized a workshop on the impact of climate change on water resources management to translate research results into guidance for water managers. It has proposed the NET-DYNAMO project to the European Science Foundation to develop climate change assessment tools for mountain catchments and has organized workshops on global change in mountain regions at conferences of the American Geophysical Union and European Geosciences Union.

39. The Mountain Institute organized a workshop in 2009 on tropical glacier recession in Peru. The theme of the workshop, "Adapting to a world without

glaciers", explored the impact of short- and long-term glacial recession and global warming on downstream rural and urban populations.

Mountain water

40. Mountain water resources are increasingly under pressure, with serious implications for both mountain and lowland areas. Greater attention is being paid to this critical issue through events, scientific publications and research programmes around the world, but more concerted efforts are required to face the growing challenges of adequate water quality and supply.

41. In March 2009, the fifth World Water Forum held a side event on the theme "Mountains of the World: water towers for the 21st Century?", which was organized jointly by FAO, the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, the Nepal Water Conservation Foundation and the Geographic Institute of the University of Berne. An important message emerged from the event: mountain water resources are under increasing pressure; innovative management approaches, cross-sectoral institutional mechanisms and forward-looking political decisions are required in order to face the future challenges.

42. Recent research results from the Geographic Institute demonstrate that the hydrological contribution from mountain regions to the adjacent lowlands is disproportionally high. In humid areas, mountain discharge proportions of 20-50 per cent of total discharge are observed, while in semi-arid and arid areas the contribution of mountains to total discharge amounts to 50-90 per cent, with extremes of over 95 per cent. About 44 per cent of mountain areas provide supportive or essential water resources for the lowland dwellers and function as "water towers". Large mountain systems, which are critically important are found in the Rocky Mountains, the Andes, the Middle East, northern and southern Africa, Central Asia and in the western and eastern Himalayas. Lowland regions, which today depend heavily on mountain water resources, might be adversely affected by altered discharge patterns from mountains and increasing demands for water for food production.

43. It is increasingly recognized that high altitude wetlands are important for water storage, flood mitigation, and as support for thousands of livelihoods throughout the Hindu Kush-Himalaya region. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development has created a regional database for high altitude wetlands to meet the information demand on this resource.

44. The Institut de la Montagne in Chambéry, France, has issued a number of publications on mountains and water and organized events, such as the session on the theme "Hydrology and climatology in mountain areas" at the meeting of the European Geosciences Union in 2008 and a special session on the theme "Water in mountains" at the thirteenth World Water Congress, held in Montpellier, France.

Watershed management

45. Current approaches to watershed management combine physical interventions with the promotion of sustainable livelihoods in order to reverse the degradation of natural resources and buffer the negative impacts of socio-economic change.

46. The follow-up to the global review of watershed management experiences, led by FAO, has received considerable attention since 2007. The technical publication

entitled "The new generation of watershed management programmes and projects" and the policy document entitled "Why invest in watershed management?" were widely disseminated. The recommendations from the global review are being applied in several field projects, such as in Pakistan, Tajikistan and West Africa.

47. The twenty-sixth session of the European Forestry Commission Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds was held in 2008 in Oulu, Finland, on the theme "Forests, water and climate change in high altitude and high latitude watersheds".

48. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development is focusing on capacity-building for integrated watershed management practices. Three international training courses were held in 2007, 2008 and 2009 in Kathmandu, as were customized training sessions in Afghanistan and Tibet.

49. The Latin American Technical Cooperation Network on Watershed Management aims to increase technical capacity in watershed management, focusing on exchanges of experience, knowledge management and transnational cooperation. The Network continues to play a key role in monitoring and in fostering collaborative actions in Latin America as well as in networking information and experience related to integrated watershed management through electronic forums and the publication of a periodical.

Disaster risk management

50. Disaster risk management in mountain areas is receiving increasing attention, particularly in the context of the impacts of climate change. The growing risks of glacial lake outburst floods in the Himalayas and rockfalls in the Alps, resulting from the upward movement of permafrost, which is threatening strategic roads and railway lines, are just two examples.

51. The first World Landslide Forum was organized by the International Consortium on Landslides in 2008. FAO contributed to a special session on the theme "Watershed and forest management for risk reduction", which put landslides into a multi-hazard, landscape, livelihood and food security context.

52. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development has developed a training manual for flash flood management and is updating the inventory of potentially dangerous glacial lakes in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya region. In terms of regional floods, the Centre has developed a web-based system for sharing precipitation and discharge data. To overcome the lack of access to data, the Centre is exploring the possibility of using rainfall estimations based on satellite information as a component in early warning systems for floods and flash floods.

Indigenous issues

53. Indigenous groups living in less-favoured areas, such as mountains, are among the poorest in the world owing to socio-economic and political marginalization. Yet, many lessons can be learned from their approaches to and experiences in managing and conserving mountain ecosystems.

54. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development and Tebtebba Foundation (Philippines) finalized an analysis of the achievements of the first International Decade of the World's Indigenous People in 10 countries in Asia with

a specific focus on mountain areas. The findings show that most Governments still do not fully recognize indigenous peoples in their national constitutions, especially their right to access land and natural resources.

55. The World Mountain People Association, born out of the decision to make the voice of the mountain people and their needs heard, is currently proposing to create regional centres for interaction and cooperation between the mountain populations and national policymakers, national funding agencies and international actors (local and international non-governmental organizations).

56. The increased role of indigenous peoples in decision-making regarding development processes was apparent at the Indigenous People's Global Summit on Climate Change, held in Alaska, United States of America, in 2009. The summit enabled indigenous peoples from around the world to exchange knowledge and experiences in adapting to the impacts of climate change and to develop key messages and recommendations for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties, to be held in Copenhagen, in December 2009. The Mountain Partnership secretariat delivered a presentation and explored ways on how the Partnership could help move these important issues forward in mountain regions.

Gender

57. Mountain women face many of the same challenges faced by women throughout the developing world, but those challenges are further accentuated by altitude, steep terrain and isolation.

58. In response to the Orem Declaration of Mountain Women (the final document of The Women of the Mountains Conference, 2007, organized by Utah Valley University and the Utah-Russia Institute in Orem, Utah, United States of America), several institutions in the Rocky Mountain States of North America established a regional network on sustainable mountain development and gender issues. This led to exchanges of state legislatures/parliaments between Rocky Mountain States and mountain nations in Central Asia; including support of sales by Vista 360, a non-governmental organization based in the United States of hand-made local handicrafts from the mountains of Central Asia in the United States and the funding of cultural exchanges.

59. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development has organized training sessions, workshops and exposure visits on gender and socially inclusive disaster preparedness, gender mainstreaming in medicinal and aromatic plants; and exposure visits for Afghani women professionals to observe small enterprises run by women in Nepal. It has also carried out gender assessments of poverty reduction projects in India and Nepal with the aim of formulating gender-sensitive mountain policies and practices.

60. Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management implemented the project entitled "Institutionalizing gender-responsive research and development through women's networks" with partners in India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Nepal.

Payment for environmental services

61. Mountain regions have a significant potential for the deployment of innovative financing mechanisms such as payment for environmental services schemes, given the global importance of their resources (water, biodiversity energy, among others).

62. The FAO Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions project, funded by France and Switzerland, published a discussion paper in 2007 for policymakers which provides a comparative overview of existing methods and tools aiming to valorize mountain externalities, and draws success elements for the implementation of payment for environmental services.

High-quality mountain products

63. High-quality mountain products are becoming an increasingly important means to improve the livelihoods of mountain communities around the world.

64. The Mountain Products Programme of FAO, implemented in the context of the Mountain Partnership, is working to improve the production and marketing of quality local products (for example, in Morocco) by providing mountain people with organizational skills, market linkages, technology and needed know-how.

65. In 2009, during the Commission on Sustainable Development Partnerships Fair, several Mountain Partnership members presented their work on high-quality products, including the work of the Mountain Institute on medicinal and aromatic plants in eastern Nepal, its support to Nixi Tibetan potters in China, Practical Action's help to farmers in Nepal and Peru to improve dairy value chains for milk and cheese production using an innovative participatory market mapping approach, and the work of the Dean's Beans Organic Coffee Company with Ethiopian coffee farmers to ensure high-quality production that is sold at fair trade prices.

Tourism

66. Tourism in mountain areas is a potential long-term source of income and, if well and wisely managed, can create positive effects that can be channelled towards both conservation and benefit-sharing.

67. UNEP has championed a number of initiatives designed to promote sustainability in mountain tourism activities, including the good practices guide entitled "Tourism and mountains" and the Marketing Assistance for Sustainable Tourism in Nepal (MAST-Nepal) project, which are two recent initiatives coordinated by UNEP to support mountain destinations. MAST-Nepal is a two-year project funded by the European Commission's Asia-Invest Programme which is designed to assist tourism companies in Nepal to develop and market more sustainable tourism products.

68. The World Tourism Organization has developed a set of indicators in order to assist managers in making informed decisions regarding issues of particular concern to mountain environments, for example, loss or degradation of flora and fauna, erosion, impacts of activities on water quality, seasonality and the economic benefits of tourism activity.

Policy and law

69. The Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountains (SARD-M) project aims to assess the strengths and weaknesses of mountain policies, institutions and processes in terms of social, economic and environmental aspects. Rapid assessments have been conducted in the Andes, the Carpathians, Central America, the Hindu Kush-Himalaya region, the Mediterranean Basin, South-East Europe and East Africa. Its overall report, published in 2007, provides an analysis of the major findings and knowledge on how to mainstream sustainable mountain development into national and regional policymaking.

70. The regional Fouta Djallon Highlands Integrated Natural Resources Management Project, funded by the Global Environmental Facility, is a 10-year project which started in 2009 and is jointly implemented by the African Union, FAO and UNEP. The Project involves eight countries in West Africa, namely, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone. One important component of the project is to mitigate the causes and negative impacts of land degradation through the establishment of a regional legal and institutional framework and the strengthening of regional cooperation in transboundary natural resources management. The project will support the eight participating countries in adapting and harmonizing their conservation laws.

71. The European Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Areas contributed to the draft of the own-initiative opinion entitled "For a green paper — towards an European Union policy for upland regions: a European vision for upland regions", which was unanimously adopted by the Committee of the Regions in 2008.

Education

72. The International Programme on Research and Training on Sustainable Management of Mountain Areas was conceived of and organized at the end of 2007 by the Mountain Partnership secretariat, UNESCO and the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Turin, Italy. The programme is funded by the Piedmont region, local authorities, private groups and by international organizations (Capacity Building International, Germany (InWent) and the Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion (CONDESAN)). In 2008, the training course focused on "Mountain Environment and Global Change", and in 2009 on "Developing economic opportunities for mountain areas".

73. UNESCO is currently preparing a teaching resource kit for mountainous countries in English, French and Spanish, funded by the Flemish Government of Belgium. The kit targets schoolteachers and pupils in secondary schools in mountain countries worldwide and will be distributed in late 2009 or early 2010. The kit offers a creative approach to environmental education and is designed to stimulate pupils' curiosity and allow for a better transmission of scientific information and environmental knowledge.

74. The Move4Nature Teacher Training programme on Education for Sustainable Development in the Carpathians is being developed by the Mountain Partnership secretariat Environmental Reference Centre at the UNEP Office in Vienna in partnership with the Carpathian Sustainable Education Network. The training

programme is aimed at introducing the topic of protection and sustainable development of the Carpathian Mountains in regional educational institutions.

75. The University of Central Asia is one of the few institutions worldwide that is dedicated specifically to mountain research and development. Founded in 2000 by the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and His Highness the Aga Khan, the University has signed a series of memorandums of understanding with partner universities worldwide. It covers capacity-building for faculty as well as joint research initiatives, including a programme for long-term monitoring in the mountains of Central Asia. In Tajikistan, the University offers training courses to employees of Afghan state and civil society organizations.

Research

76. In 2008, the Mountain Partnership secretariat organized a workshop to define and agree on ways to achieve better information sharing and coordination of scientific events and projects related to mountains, to improve collaboration on research activities focused on mountains, and to facilitate fund-raising for new research projects. As a result, a new communications system is being established that includes an online discussion forum and calendar of events related to research on mountains.

77. UNESCO further promoted the Global Change in Mountain Regions (GLOCHAMORE) initiative jointly developed with the Mountain Research Initiative. An international UNESCO-Man and Biosphere workshop on the theme "Research strategy on global change in mountain biosphere reserves" was held at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development in 2008 in conjunction with the International Mountain Biodiversity Conference jointly sponsored by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and UNESCO. During the workshop, participants fine-tuned implementation modalities of the GLOCHAMORE research strategy to render it operational in mountain biosphere reserves and other mountain protected areas. In 2009, 10 mountain biosphere reserves (in China, India, Germany, Peru, Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, United States) started implementing the GLOCHAMORE research strategy.

78. The Centre for Mountain Studies, Perth College, Scotland, coordinates the integrated assessment of Europe's mountain areas for the European Environment Agency and the Climate Change — Adapting to The Impacts, by Communities in Northern Peripheral Regions project (Clim-ATIC). Clim-ATIC brings together new and existing knowledge and experiences on how rural communities throughout Europe's northern periphery can better increase their capacity to make and implement decisions to adapt to climate change. UNESCO established a Chair in Sustainable Mountain Development at the Centre for Mountain Studies to support the development of research on climate change in mountain areas and to share the innovative approaches initiated at the Centre with institutions in Asia and Latin America to develop Masters-level courses.

79. In 2008, a European Cooperation in Science and Technology strategic workshop on the theme "Global change and sustainable development in mountain regions" was organized by the Austrian Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscape, the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the

Mountain Research Initiative. The workshop focused on the implications and challenges of climate and political and socio-economic change for the future development of mountain areas.

80. The Mountain Research Initiative established the South-Eastern Europe Mountain Research Network to organize global change research in the mountain regions of Greece, Turkey and the Balkan region. It also created the Science for the Carpathians network to further global change research in the Carpathians and organized a Swiss-South African conference on mountain observatories to initiate international collaboration, including the planned establishment of a network of permanent hydroecological observatories in mountains in southern Africa. In 2007, the Global Change Research Network in African Mountains was launched with the support of the Mountain Research Initiative. The network comprises 450 members and organized a planning workshop in 2008 on the theme "Establishing high altitude climate observatory systems in the Ethiopian highlands".

Communications and networking

81. In 2007, the theme of International Mountain Day, "Facing change: climate change in mountain areas", underlined the effects of climate change on mountains and the implications for humankind beyond mountain areas. In 2008, the theme of International Mountain Day was "Food security in mountains: high time for action" and provided an apt occasion to reflect on how hard it is for mountain people to consistently obtain adequate and nutritious food. In 2009, the theme for International Mountain Day will focus on disaster risk management in mountain areas.

82. The Mountain Forum is a global network of networks promoting sustainable mountain development through information sharing, mutual support, awareness-raising and advocacy. Currently the Mountain Forum comprises around 5,500 individual members. The year 2008 saw eight regional e-discussions and conferences and two international e-conferences on key themes, such as the use of Geographic Information System and disaster recovery strategies. During 2007/2008, institutional mapping exercises resulted in profiles of over 800 organizations working on mountain issues in order to support networking and build strategic alliances.

83. Since its creation, InfoAndina has fulfilled the role of communication and information dissemination for CONDESAN. It has centred its efforts towards the generation of knowledge that supports reflection processes and facilitates the work of partners on sustainable mountain development in Latin America.

84. Mountain Research and Development is the only peer-reviewed international journal that deals with research as well as development in mountain areas worldwide. During 2007 and 2008, Mountain Research and Development featured contributions on issues such as migration and vulnerability, policy and institutions for mountain development, and mountain rural development in the face of globalization. In 2009, the journal became an online publication.

B. Partnerships, transboundary cooperation and funding mechanisms

Partnerships

85. The Mountain Partnership continues to grow and currently has more than 160 members, including governments, intergovernmental organizations and major groups. Starting in 2008, the Mountain Partnership secretariat, in order to provide more effective services and support to partnership members, has undergone a process of decentralization. Today, the Mountain Partnership secretariat consists of central and decentralized hubs hosted, respectively, by FAO in Rome (Central hub), the Banff Centre in Canada (North American hub), CONDESAN in Peru (Latin America hub), the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development in Nepal (Asia/Pacific hub), as well as the Environmental Reference Centre hosted by UNEP in Vienna. Specific thematic initiatives have been launched during the period 2008/2009 by the Mountain Partnership secretariat in response to emerging issues and priority needs. A regional project for the strengthening of participatory management for the sustainable development of the Andes is being prepared in close cooperation with the Governments of Argentina and Peru. Discussions were held with the Rockefeller Foundation to explore potential collaboration in the area of adaptation to climate change. Cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity secretariat has been initiated to assist in the implementation of the Programme of Work on mountain biological diversity. In 2009, the Asia/Pacific hub held online training advocacy courses for Asia/Pacific members. To increase awareness on sustainable mountain development issues, it also initiated the Outreach Programme for Central Asia, with regular radio broadcasts and newspaper coverage in local languages for Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Latin America hub held electronic conferences on the themes "Food crisis: challenges and opportunities in the Andes", "Hydrological environmental services in the Andes" and "Rural territorial development and governance of natural resources: reflections in the Andes".

Transboundary cooperation

86. The legal framework for the integrated and sustainable development of the Alps, provided by the Alpine Convention, was broadened with the adoption of an action plan on mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. Working groups and platforms representing contracting parties and observers pursued activities related to transport, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, natural hazards and ecological networks. New working groups and platforms were established to deal with water management, wildlife and demographic changes in the Alps. In addition, seminars on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Population and Culture were conducted with the aim of strengthening transboundary cooperation between mountain populations. The Alpine Convention continued its cooperation activities in the regions of the Carpathians, the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

87. The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathian Mountains has been ratified by all seven Carpathian countries: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. On the occasion of the Second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, held in 2009 in Bucharest, the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity was adopted and signed. Moreover, the Ministers called for the establishment of the "Carpathian Space" as a

proposed financial instrument for enhancing the protection and sustainable regional development of this important mountain region in the heart of Europe.

88. An intergovernmental process for the sustainable development of the Caucasus mountain region is being developed in partnership with UNEP/Vienna, the Regional Environmental Centres of the Caucasus and the Russian Federation, with financial support from the European Community. A meeting of Ministers and high-level representatives of the Caucasus countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Russian Federation and Turkey) was held in 2007 in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, resulted in a call to strengthen partnerships for the protection and sustainable development of the mountain regions of the Caucasus and a request to UNEP to propose a road map of the process. At a follow-up meeting in 2009, governmental representatives suggested concrete thematic areas for intergovernmental collaboration.

89. The Central Asia Mountain Partnership, funded by a Swiss project from 2001 to 2008, has evolved into an independent non-governmental organization, CAMP Alatoo, that is today engaged in mountain pasture management, energy efficiency, community development and disaster risk management, and was the main organizer of the regional Dare-to-Share Fair on mountain development and learning for sustainability, held in Dushanbe in 2008.

90. The Alliance of Central Asian Mountain Communities, an association of 41 community-based organizations from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, is facilitating exchanges of experience and information by conveying the community voice to global forums. It is implementing a number of projects on energy efficiency and production of fuel-efficient stoves which, on the basis of their success and local appreciation, have received government endorsement for wider application.

91. Building on the Swiss-funded Pamir Strategy Project (2001-2003), the Centre for Development and Environment and its partners will begin a new four-year programme in 2009 for sustainable land management in the High Pamir and Pamir-Alai Mountains in Central Asia. The programme will establish demonstrated good practices through a participatory and transboundary approach to the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources in the region.

92. As part of a broader regional cooperation agenda, the Aga Khan Development Network is creating linkages between communities in the mountainous areas of south-eastern Tajikistan and Badakhshan Province in Afghanistan. In particular, the Network is working on a teacher training programme in Tajikistan, with a counterpart institution in Afghanistan, to expand cross-border educational exchanges.

93. The Paramo Andino Project is a regional initiative that contributes to overcoming the main barriers to conservation of biodiversity and protection of Paramo hydrology. The project is financed by the Global Environment Facility, executed by CONDESAN at the regional level and by different partners at the national level. The expected results of the project are working compensation schemes, which reward efforts contributing to the conservation of Paramo ecosystems, and relevant policy mainstreamed at different scales.

94. In 2007, the Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources brought together member organizations and experts to analyse successful case studies and discuss priority

lines of work for the conservation and sustainable development of Mediterranean mountains. As a follow-up to the workshop, the Mountain Partnership secretariat central hub in Rome hosted in 2009 a preparatory meeting with representatives of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, several Italian regions and environmental organizations to discuss building a Mediterranean mountains agenda. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources has agreed to lead this initiative, which will foster the sharing and exchange of information, best practices and knowledge as well as provide technical support and enhance capacities for conservation and sustainable development in Mediterranean mountains.

Funding mechanisms

95. A preliminary portfolio analysis of World Bank investments relevant to sustainable mountain development indicates investments of about $344 million globally for the period 2007-2009. In terms of regional focus, investments in sustainable mountain development in the Latin America region are leading with about $93 million, followed by Eastern Europe and Central Asia with about $63 million. The Middle East/North Africa region received investments in mountain regions amounting to about $40 million, while for Africa and South Asia only smaller amounts were directly associated with sustainable mountain development. In recent years, many climate change mitigation and adaptation projects have been developed, and it is expected that this area of investment will continue to grow over the coming years. Additional investments from new, innovative financing mechanisms, such as carbon trading, are also expected to be increasingly available for mountain regions.

96. Funding economic growth, political empowerment, citizenship equality and poverty reduction of mountain peoples, most of which are indigenous and marginalized from mainstream investment and development arrangements, forms part of the mandate of the International Fund for Agriculture Development. The Fund supports the development of innovative (rural) financial services, such as Financing Facility for Remittance, and the development of index-based weather insurance and related services, which are being piloted and tested, including in mountain areas.

97. The Aga Khan Foundation is achieving a significant impact on poverty alleviation by actively linking mountain communities with service providers and facilitating support in cases where communities cannot access services.

98. PlaNet Finance works to build the capacity of microfinance institutions to deliver their services, including in mountain areas, while assisting their clients in developing sustainable economic activities. In the Yungus region of Argentina, PlaNet Finance has conducted a feasibility study for ecotourism activities. In Nepal, PlaNet Finance is proposing to help microentrepreneurs switch to sustainable business practices, while among the Karen people in north-east Thailand and in the foothills of the sacred Mt. Banahaw in the Philippines, cultural tourism programmes are being developed.

V. Recommendations

99. During the period since the Secretary-General last reported to the General Assembly on the topic of sustainable mountain development, significant progress has been made on several issues ranging from raising awareness about the global importance of mountains to the strengthening and creation of institutional arrangements at the national, regional and international levels and greater collaborative action by the international community to address specific mountain issues. Nevertheless, much remains to be done, especially in the light of the often rapid and severe impact on mountain areas from climate change, soaring food prices, migration to urban areas and other issues that require urgent attention. The General Assembly, in its efforts to address those challenges in a manner that is consistent with chapter 13 of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals, may wish to reiterate some of the possible courses of action for Governments, such as:

(a) Encourage the continuation of existing or the further establishment of new national committees or similar institutional arrangements, bodies and mechanisms to strengthen intersectoral coordination and collaboration for sustainable development in mountain areas;

(b) Assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to formulate and implement national strategies and programmes for sustainable mountain development, through bilateral, multilateral, and South-South cooperation, as well as through non-traditional arrangements, such as decentralized cooperation;

(c) Promote, where relevant, the establishment of regional mechanisms for coordinated transboundary cooperation for sustainable mountain development and strengthen existing mechanisms, such as the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention, and exchange and learning opportunities between them;

(d) Encourage greater engagement by civil society and the private sector in the development and implementation of programmes related to sustainable development in mountains;

(e) Support the collaborative efforts of the Mountain Partnership and encourage the active involvement of relevant government, civil society, and, in particular, private sector institutions at the national and regional levels, in this evolving voluntary alliance;

(f) Support the continued development and implementation of communication and advocacy programmes for sustainable mountain development at all levels, taking advantage of the opportunities provided annually by International Mountain Day on 11 December;

(g) Support education, extension and capacity-building programmes, in particular among local mountain communities, to further sustainable mountain development at all levels;

(h) Accelerate efforts, in the light of the rapid rate of change and severity of impacts, to enhance awareness of the effects of climate change as well as risks and hazards in mountain areas and develop adaptation measures, approaches and policies to mitigate and manage impacts;

(i) Support increased and better coordinated research efforts at all levels to gain a better understanding of the environmental, economic and social drivers of change affecting mountain regions and promote the collection of disaggregated data from mountain areas as the basis for informed decision-making for appropriate policies and programmes;

(j) Foster strengthening of the role of mountain women in planning and decision-making processes that affect their communities, cultures, livelihoods and environments;

(k) Increase levels of investment and funding for sustainable development in mountain regions at the global, regional, national and community levels, including through innovative financial mechanisms and approaches, such as debt-for-sustainable development swaps, payment for environmental services and microfinance opportunities;

(l) Promote and provide a supportive and enabling environment for the development of high-quality products and services from mountain areas as a means to improve livelihoods and protect mountain environments and encourage more active involvement by the private sector in all parts of the value chain for high-quality mountain products;

(m) Ensure, through more effective engagement in the decision-making process, that indigenous cultures, traditions and knowledge are fully recognized and included in development policy and planning in mountain regions and that access and agreed-to rights to land and natural resources are respected;

(n) Promote the conservation and sustainable use of increasingly scarce water resources from mountain areas through innovative management approaches, improved institutional mechanisms that cross administrative boundaries and forward-looking political decisions that safeguard water resources for future generations;

(o) Ensure that policies and programmes are in place to adequately and urgently respond to soaring food prices and related challenges for mountain communities, which are often among those most severely affected;

(p) Encourage multi-stakeholder cooperation, through the Mountain Partnership and other mechanisms, for more effective implementation of the Programme of Work on mountain biological diversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular, in view of the review by the Conference of the Parties that will take place in 2010;

(q) Support better integration of mountain issues in intergovernmental discussions on climate change and combating desertification in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, respectively;

(r) Renew efforts to ensure that mountain issues are more effectively mainstreamed into and receive high priority within development agendas and processes dealing with poverty reduction, food security, climate change and other issues that are critical to sustainable development in mountain areas.

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Effects of atomic radiation

Letter dated 10 July 2009 from the Chairman of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour, as Chairman of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and in consultation with the officers of the Committee, to inform you of the recent activities of the Committee. This is in lieu of the usual report of the Committee, owing to the unavoidable and necessary postponement of the fifty-seventh session.

Because of an unforeseen serious personal crisis for the Secretary of the Committee, necessitating extended periods of leave between October 2008 and April 2009, work was significantly hindered on arranging documents for delivery at the fifty-seventh session of the Committee, originally scheduled from 25 to 29 May 2009. The officers of the Committee considered options for the best way to proceed, taking into account the expectations of the General Assembly, the possibility and effectiveness of convening a session later in 2009, the existing backlog of work for the secretariat and the difficulties that the United Nations Environment Programme would have had in providing a temporary replacement for the Secretary of the Committee. As a result, it was concluded that the fifty-seventh session should be rescheduled for the period from 19 to 23 April 2010. The representatives of States members and observers (international organizations and the six countries that have expressed an interest in becoming members of the Committee) were notified accordingly.

The officers have taken steps to mitigate the consequences of this unavoidable measure. I should like to inform the Assembly of the present status and future plans regarding matters raised in the relevant paragraphs of General Assembly resolution 63/89.

* A/64/150.

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Assessment and review of effects of ionizing radiation (paras. 5 and 6)

To help recover lost time in preparing documents for the rescheduled fifty-seventh session in 2010, the officers of the Committee have requested the secretariat to take action in line with the longer-term strategic plan and programme of work agreed by the Committee at its fifty-sixth session (see A/63/46, sect. III) and endorsed by the General Assembly at its sixty-third session. Accordingly, the secretariat has been making arrangements to convene specialized expert group meetings to review relevant material and has been engaging consultants for the development of manuscripts.

Data collection and cooperation with other bodies (paras. 8, 9 and 11)

With a view to streamlining the collection of data on radiation exposure and avoiding duplication of efforts, the secretariat is reviewing lessons identified from recent Committee assessments and from other data collection initiatives and mechanisms. It is convening expert group meetings in the second half of 2009 to address the future collection of data relating to public, occupational and medical patient exposures. The meetings will involve the World Health Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the European Union.

Staffing and resources (paras. 13, 15 and 16)

It is an inescapable conclusion that the current situation, resulting in the postponement of the fifty-seventh session, has been considerably complicated by the continued reliance on a single post at the professional level in the Committee secretariat.

Hopefully, given that the matter has been raised repeatedly for nearly a decade by the Committee in its annual reports, relief from reliance on a single post at the professional level may finally be in sight. I note that an additional profes ional post, at the P-4 level, was included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010–2011 (see A/64/6 (Sect. 14)) through redeployed resources within Section 14 (Environment) in line with the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/63/478). I sincerely hope that the issue may finally be resolved in the near future.

Aspirants to membership of the Scientific Committee (paras. 14 and 17)

The report of the Secretary-General (A/63/478) contains an annex on the views of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation on membership, staffing and financing as expressed in consultations held during its fifty-sixth session (10-18 July 2008).

In the Committee efforts to develop detailed, objective and transparent criteria to be applied equitably to current and future members alike, a paper will be circulated among the representatives of the 21 States members of the Committee so that discussions can be facilitated and concluded at the fifty-seventh session, now scheduled from 19 to 23 April 2010. It is important that the paper be finalized by the representatives in joint and open debate. The outcome will then be submitted to the General Assembly.

Finally, I should like to state that the Secretary of the Committee is making every effort to recover from the difficult situation, as well as striving to complete the issuance, as sales publications, of the 2006 and 2008 Committee full reports with scientific annexes. Taken together with the mitigating actions now instituted, I believe that this will ensure that a full year will not be lost for the work of the Committee.

(Signed) Norman E. **Gentner**
Chairman
United Nations Scientific Committee on the
Effects of Atomic Radiation